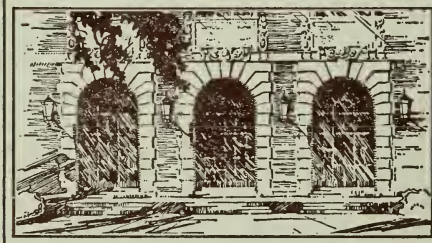




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# PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

# WAR OF THE REBELLION

ADDRESSES DELIVERED BEFORE THE COMMANDERY  
OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, MILITARY ORDER  
OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES

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SECOND SERIES

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EDITED BY  
A. NOEL BLAKEMAN



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## PREFACE.

THE compiler and editor of this volume, does not suppose that the authors of the several papers which it contains desire to lay special claim to literary excellence. They were prepared for the entertainment of the Companions of the Commandery of the State of New York at their stated meetings, which are always preceded by a banquet, and while they have from time to time admirably served this purpose, they form also a valuable contribution to the history of that great Civil Strife that so severely tested the sustaining power of our Republican form of Government. For the most part they recount "personal experiences" and hence are more in the nature of fireside narratives, which fact deprives the frequent use of the personal pronoun of the charge of what might be otherwise considered offensive egotism, while at the same time it accounts for the lighter vein in which grave topics are sometimes treated, and explains the freedom with which purely personal incidents are related and personal views expressed.

These papers are valuable not only because of their personal character, being as they are the testimony of those who were actual participants in the events they describe, but furthermore because in a few years the living witnesses of these stirring scenes of war and strife will have passed away, and then the personal narrative must be necessarily forever closed. During a few years immediately after the conclusion of the great struggle, the published literature relating to the war was frequently embellished with more or less that partook somewhat of the character of romance and fiction, but since the publication by authority of the National Government of the *War Records*,



the period of romance has necessarily given place to a period that is producing history pure and simple, for no writer however reputable, now cares to controvert the record or juggle with official reports which have not proved to be inaccurate and which are within reach of all who care to read. Fair criticism of military operations connected with the war and honest differences of opinion as to results will continue at least through this generation, but no such criticism or opinion will now pass current unless based upon the official record, and hence no Companion will have the temerity to spin a yarn in the presence of his fellows that cannot be substantiated by abundant reference to what has become accepted as standard authority. These papers possess still further value because in not a few instances they are the narratives of officers who held more or less important commands afloat as well as ashore, and hence are in a position to afford an intelligent explanation of orders which they either issued or executed, for an army both as a whole and in its several parts and a ship of war is nothing if it is not a machine, moved at the will of its commanding officer. However well disciplined, however well equipped, its offensive or defensive power can only be developed and applied by the genius and skill of its Commander.

For the present these papers have served to entertain, amuse and instruct those who took part in making the history they describe, for the future it is to be hoped they will inspire the patriotism and loyalty of those who come after and will read these pages, not as the record of cold history, but as the story of living men, who for love of country and a patriotic sense of duty, sought to uphold the principles of a Government that had been to them a living reality in all that was good, beneficent and true.

With but a single exception these papers have been arranged in the order, as to date, in which they were read, and with but two exceptions the writers are all living at the time of publication. General Francis A. Walker was a guest of the Commandery May 6th, 1896, and then paid a beautiful tribute to the

memory of his old Commander and within eight months he himself had joined the great army on the other side of the river. Medical Director Martin, U. S. N., one of the heroes of the Naval battle in Hampton Roads, died January 14th, 1892.

A. N. B.

This volume, the second published by the Commandery of the State of New York, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, has been edited by Acting Assistant Paymaster A. Noel Blakeman, Recorder of the Commandery, to whom the Library Committee is under great obligations for painstaking and valuable services. It has been the effort of the Committee to make the volume as nearly like the first as possible, in order to maintain a desirable uniformity in appearance.

The portrait of General Ulysses S. Grant, the Commander of the Commandery, 1884-6, adds to the value of the volume. For the use of the plate from which the portrait was printed, the Commandery is indebted to the D. Van Nostrand Company, 23 and 27 Warren St., New York.

WM. J. CARLTON, Captain, U. S. V.

LUIS F. EMILIO, Captain, U. S. V.

EDWARD TRENCHARD, In Succession.

*Library Committee.*

NEW YORK, June, 1897.



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
SINKING of the <i>Congress</i> and <i>Cumberland</i> by the <i>Merrimac</i> , by Medical Director Charles Martin, U. S. N. . . . .	I
Snake Creek Gap and Atlanta, by Brevet Major Rowland Cox, U. S. V. . . . .	7
In Commemoration of General William Tecumseh Sherman, by Senator John Sherman and others. . . . .	30
In and Out of Confederate Prisons, by Captain George H. Starr, U. S. V. . . . .	64
The Navy in the Battles and Capture of Fort Fisher, by Lt.- Commander James Parker, late U. S. N. . . . .	104
Admiral Farragut's Passage of Port Hudson, by Paymaster Wm. T. Meredith, U. S. N. . . . .	118
In the Company Street, by Sergeant Charles E. Sprague, U. S. V. . . . .	126
Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief, by Major Alexander K. Mc- Clure, U. S. V. . . . .	140
Major-General John Sedgwick, by Major-General M. T. Mahon, U. S. V. . . . .	159
Reminiscences of Cadet and Army Service, by Brevet Brigadier- General Peter Michie, U. S. V. . . . .	183
The Duty and Value of Patriotism, by Archbishop John Ireland, late Chaplain, U. S. V. . . . .	198
Surrender of the Navy Yard at Pensacola, Florida, January 12, 1861, by Rear Admiral Henry Erben, U. S. N. . . . .	213
The Cavalry at Chancellorsville, May, 1865, by Captain W. L. Hermance, U. S. V. . . . .	223
Some Personal Reminiscences of the Naval Service, by Asst. Paymaster A. Noel Blakeman, late U. S. N. . . . .	232

	PAGE
The Battle of Atlanta, by Maj. Gen'l. Grenville M. Dodge, U. S. V. . . . .	240
The Naval Victory at Port Royal, S. C., Nov. 7, 1861, by Bvt. Lieut.-Col. Wm. Conant Church, U. S. V. . . . .	255
The Battle of Corinth, by General D. S. Stanley, U. S. A. . . . .	267
A Few Yarns of the Early Sixties, by Rear Admiral O. F. Stanton, U. S. N. . . . .	280
In Memory of Maj.-General John Gibbon, U. S. A., Commander- in-Chief, by Maj. C. A. Woodruff, U. S. A. . . . .	290
General Gibbon in the Second Corps, by General Francis A. Walker, U. S. V. . . . .	302
The Old Vermont Brigade, by Lieut.-Col. Aldace F. Walker, U. S. V. . . . .	316

# THE LOYAL LEGION PAPERS FOR 1896.

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## SINKING OF THE "CONGRESS" AND "CUMBERLAND" BY THE "MERRIMAC."

A Paper Read by Medical Director CHARLES MARTIN, U. S. Navy  
(Retired), May 5, 1886.

COMPANIONS: I will tell you what I saw at Newport News when the *Merrimac* destroyed the *Congress* and the *Cumberland*, and fought with the *Monitor*. It was a drama in three acts, and twelve hours will elapse between the second and third acts.

"Let us begin at the beginning"—1861. The North Atlantic squadron is at Hampton Roads, except the frigate *Congress* and the razee *Cumberland*; they are anchored at Newport News, blockading the James River and Norfolk. The *Merrimac*, the Rebel ram, is in the dry dock of the Norfolk navy-yard; for, after the unsuccessful attempt at the outbreak of the rebellion to burn the yard and the men-of-war lying there, it was abandoned to the enemy, leaving them in possession of the accumulation of arms and ammunition which served as an outfit for the army of the Confederacy; and they utilized the half-burned frigate *Merrimac*, cut her down, gave her a short, powerful ram capable of doing much harm to our ships, they built over her a sloping roof of railroad iron, they made her a

floating bomb-proof, and when afloat she looked like an old-fashioned barn submerged to the eaves. And, besides her three broadside guns, she had a port and a heavy gun in each gable.

The *Monitor* is building in New York City. She is a secret, and passes are given to visit the shipyard where she is building, and a young Copperhead takes advantage of frequent opportunities: he makes sketches and notes of her dimensions, etc.; he carries them with him down into Dixey. This treachery is indirectly a cause of safety to the *Monitor*. The notes show the Confederate Government that the ram of the *Merrimac* is too short—it cannot reach the hull of the *Monitor* under her overhang. They lengthen the ram, and are well aware that in doing so they have weakened it, and it is determined to keep the *Merrimac* in the dry dock, wait the arrival of the *Monitor*, send her out to meet her, and in the action it is positive that an opportunity will offer to pierce and sink her. The ram is a terror, and both sides say, "When the *Merrimac* comes out!" The last of February, 1862, the *Monitor* is ready for sea; she will sail for Hampton Roads in charge of a steamer. There is a rumor that she has broken her steering gear before reaching Sandy Hook. She will be towed to Washington for repairs. The Rebel spies report her a failure—steering defective, turret revolves with difficulty, and when the smoke of her guns in action is added to the defects of ventilation, it will be impossible for human beings to live aboard of her. No *Monitor* to fight, the Southern press and people grumble; they pitch into the *Merrimac*. Why does she lie idle? Send her out to destroy the *Congress* and the *Cumberland*, that have so long bullied Norfolk, then sweep away the fleet at Hampton Roads, starve out Fortress Monroe, go north to Baltimore and New York and Boston, and destroy and plunder; and the voice of the people, not always an inspiration, prevails, and the ram is floated and manned and armed, and March 8th is bright and sunny when she steams down the Elizabeth River to carry out the first part of her programme. And all Norfolk and Portsmouth ride and run to the bank of the James, to have a picnic, and assist at a



naval battle and victory. The cry of "Wolf!" has so often been heard aboard the ships that the *Merrimac* has lost much of her terrors. They argue: "If she is a success, why don't she come out and destroy us?" And when seen this morning at the mouth of the river: "It is only a trial trip or a demonstration." But she creeps along the opposite shore, and both ships beat to quarters and get ready for action. The boats of the *Cumberland* are lowered, made fast to each other in line, anchored between the ship and the shore, about an eighth of a mile distant.

Here are two large sailing frigates, on a calm day, at slack water, anchored in a narrow channel, impossible to get under weigh and manœuvre, and must lie and hammer, and be hammered, so long as they hold together, or until they sink at their anchors. To help them is a tug, the *Zouave*, once used in the basin at Albany to tow canal boats under the grain elevator. The *Congress* is the senior ship; the tug makes fast to her. The *Congress* slips her cable and tries to get under weigh. The tug does her best and breaks her engine. The *Congress* goes aground in line with the shore. The *Zouave* floats down the river, firing her pop-guns at the *Merrimac* as she drifts by her. The captain of the *Congress* was detached on the 7th. He is waiting a chance to go North. He serves as a volunteer in the action, refusing to resume command and deprive the first lieutenant of a chance for glory. The captain of the *Cumberland* has been absent since the 3d. He is president of a court-martial at this moment in session on board the *Roanoke* at Hampton Roads, so the command of both the ships devolves on the first lieutenants. On board the *Cumberland* all hands are allowed to remain on deck, watching the slow approach of the *Merrimac*, and she comes on so slowly, the pilot declares she has missed the channel; she draws too much water to use her ram. She continues to advance, and two gun-boats, the *Yorktown* and the *Teazer*, accompany her. Again they beat to quarters, and every one goes to his station. There is a platform on the roof of the *Merrimac*. Her captain is standing on it. When she is near enough, he hails, "Do

you surrender?" "*Never!*" is the reply. The order to fire is given; the shot of the starboard battery rattles on the iron roof of the *Merrimac*. She answers with a shell; it sweeps the forward pivot gun, it kills and wounds ten of the gun's crew. A second slaughters the marines at the after pivot gun. The *Yorktown* and the *Teazer* keep up a constant fire. She bears down on the *Cumberland*. She rams her just aft the starboard bow. The ram goes into the sides of the ship as a knife goes into a cheese. The *Merrimac* tries to back out; the tide is making; it catches against her great length at a right angle with the *Cumberland*; it slews her around; the weakened, lengthened ram breaks off; she leaves it in the *Cumberland*. The battle rages, broadside answers broadside, and the sanded deck is red and slippery with the blood of the wounded and dying; they are dragged amidships out of the way of the guns; there is no one and no time to take them below. Delirium seizes the crew; they strip to their trousers, tie their handkerchiefs round their heads, kick off their shoes, fight and yell like demons, load and fire at will, keep it up for the rest of the forty-two minutes the ship is sinking, and fire a last gun as the water rushes into her ports.

The order comes, "Save who can!" The ship sinks head-foremost; she lists over to port; the water is ankle deep on the berth deck; the ladders unship; it is a scramble to the spar deck, a rush overboard; the boats pick up the swimmers. The after pivot gun, pivoted to starboard, breaks loose; it rushes down the decline of the deck like a furious animal; a man is in the track; he falls; the gun is on him, crushes him, bounds overboard; there is a mass of mangled flesh on the deck. The ship sinks to her tops. The boats pull for shore; a shell knocks away the head of the wharf as the boats approach it. The saved land. Instead of a defeat, it is a victory. The whole camp is rushing to meet them, with cheers, with embraces; the soldiers bring to comfort them the first thing they lay hold of—many of them the panaceas whiskey and tobacco. The sailors are clothed and fed and warmed—they have reached home. And no survivor will ever forget the loving kindness

of our companion, the colonel of the Zouaves, and the officers and men of that regiment and of the Troy regiment stationed at Newport News—they gave their all, and gave it twice, the way they gave it.

In every man-of-war exist Jonathan-and-David, Damon-and-Pythias friendships, called chummies. In the beginning of the action a man hopelessly wounded is lowered down into the cockpit; later on his chummy, with a flesh wound of his arm, goes below to have it dressed and to see his friend. As he leans over him, the dying man says, "Don't leave me, Johnny"; and Johnny sits down by him, takes him in his arms, stays with him, goes down with him—and surely much was forgiven them.

The *Merrimac* turns to the *Congress*. She is aground, but she fires her guns till the red-hot shot from the enemy sets her on fire, and the flames drive the men away from the battery. She has forty years of seasoning; she burns like a torch. Her commanding officer is killed, and her deck strewn with killed and wounded. The wind is off shore; they drag the wounded under the windward bulwark, where all hands take refuge from the flames. The sharpshooters on shore drive away a tug from the enemy. The crew and wounded of the *Congress* are safely landed. She burns the rest of the afternoon and evening, discharging her loaded guns over the camp. At midnight the fire has reached her magazines—the *Congress* disappears.

When it is signalled to the fleet at Hampton Roads that the *Merrimac* has come out, the *Minnesota* leaves her anchorage and hastens to join the battle. Her pilot puts her aground off the Elizabeth River, and she lies there helpless. The *Merrimac* has turned back for Norfolk. She has suffered from the shot of the *Congress* and the *Cumberland*, or she would stop and destroy the *Minnesota*; instead, with the *Yorktown* and *Teazer*, she goes back into the river. Sunday morning, March 9th, the *Merrimac* is coming out to finish her work. She will destroy the *Minnesota*. As she nears her, the *Monitor* appears from behind the helpless ship; she has slipped in during the night, and so quietly, her presence is unknown in the

camp. And David goes out to meet Goliath, and every man who can walk to the beach sits down there, spectators of the first iron-clad battle in the world. The day is calm, the smoke hangs thick on the water, the low vessels are hidden by the smoke. They are so sure of their invulnerability, they fight at arms' length. They fight so near the shore, the flash of their guns is seen, and the noise is heard of the heavy shot pounding the armor. They haul out for breath, and again disappear in the smoke. The *Merrimac* stops firing, the smoke lifts, she is running down the *Monitor*, but she has left her ram in the *Cumberland*. The *Monitor* slips away, turns, and renews the action. One P. M.—they have fought since 8:30 A. M.: The crews of both ships are suffocating under the armor. The frames supporting the iron roof of the *Merrimac* are sprung and shattered. The turret of the *Monitor* is dented with shot, and is revolved with difficulty. The captain of the *Merrimac* is wounded in the leg; the captain of the *Monitor* is blinded with powder. It is a drawn game. The *Merrimac*, leaking badly, goes back to Norfolk; the *Monitor* returns to Hampton Roads.

## “SNAKE CREEK GAP, AND ATLANTA.”

A Paper Read by Brevet Major ROWLAND COX, U. S. V., December 2, 1891.

I BEG to say, by way of introduction, that the paper which I have the great pleasure of reading this evening relates to the two most critical and important days in the career of General McPherson, and the two days, by much the most critical, of the Atlanta campaign, when, as it seems to me, the possibility of very serious disaster was most imminent. These two days were the 9th of May, when the affair at Snake Creek Gap took place, and the 22d of July in front of Atlanta, when Hood attacked the Federal left.

The course pursued by McPherson at Snake Creek Gap has been the subject of much adverse and ill-considered comment; and that his services on the 22d of July, the day he fell, were of an unusual character is not generally understood.

I have attempted to explain how, from the standpoint of to-day, it may be seen that the results of these two pivotal days were shaped and directed for great good by the man whose name is especially associated with them.

The Atlanta campaign began with Johnston at Dalton with an army, in round numbers, of fifty thousand men. The position he occupied was a very strong one; and it had been skillfully and completely fortified.

Toward this position, Sherman turned his face with the Armies of the Cumberland, the Ohio, and the Tennessee, his forces in the aggregate being about twice as strong as those of his adversary. The Army of the Cumberland was a little larger than that of Johnston, and commanded by General



Thomas; the Army of the Tennessee was something over twenty thousand, and commanded by General McPherson; and the Army of the Ohio, one-third smaller, was led by General Schofield. With this splendid force and organization, the campaign was opened.

It may be said generally that Johnston's position at Dalton was in a valley, with the railroad and his line of supplies directly in his rear. His right flank was in no danger, and he seems to have assumed that his left and rear were effectually protected by the range of mountains, which extended in a southwesterly direction, and which covered, like a wall, the railroad and his communications.

But investigation showed that in this range of mountains there were two gateways through which it was possible to move attacking columns. One of these gateways, Dugs Gap, was, perhaps, four miles south of where the Confederate left rested, and the other, Snake Creek Gap, concerning which very little appears to have been known, was about fourteen miles farther on.

The opening chapter of General Sherman's plan, generally stated, was to manœuvre with the main body of the army, in front of Johnston's works at Dalton, while he made a tentative movement against Dugs Gap, and threw a strong detachment toward Snake Creek Gap, hoping to get through one or both of them and into the enemy's rear.

Hooker with the Twentieth Corps was to move upon the adjacent gateway; while McPherson, with the Fifteenth Corps, commanded by Logan, and the Sixteenth, commanded by Dodge, constituting the Army of the Tennessee, was to move upon the more distant and more important one, and the remaining seventy thousand men were to watch the embankments at Dalton.

When the plan of moving through Snake Creek Gap was suggested to General Thomas, there seems to be no doubt that he endorsed it, but he very earnestly and, for him, very urgently advised that the proposed plan be modified, and that the Armies of the Tennessee and the Ohio, aggregating,

say, thirty thousand men, be deployed in front of Dalton, while the Army of the Cumberland, consisting of sixty thousand, be moved through the Gap and thrown across the railroad on the enemy's line of retreat.

But General Sherman preferred his own view and its execution was proceeded with: the Army of the Cumberland and Army of the Ohio sat down in front of Dalton, Hooker entered upon the difficult task of penetrating Dugs Gap, and McPherson put his command in motion for the Gap below. It was hoped against every reasonable probability that the important Gap would be found to be unoccupied; that it could be seized and a lodgment effected across the railroad in the enemy's rear; that Thomas and Schofield, watching the works at Dalton, would prevent Johnston from letting go and so being able to fall upon the detachment thus in possession of the railroad in his rear; and that the sum of the operations would be, first, the evacuation of Dalton, and second, the destruction of the army which held it.

The orders to the Army of the Tennessee were necessarily of a somewhat elastic character, leaving much to the discretion of its commander. General Sherman was emphatic in making known his objects and what he expected to be done, but he purposely so framed his orders that they did not stand in the way of whatever the emergency might demand.

McPherson, as always, entered into the spirit of the duty to which he was assigned, with zeal and energy, but not, I think, without misgivings. His army marched in the direction of its purposes to Gordon's Mills, thence to Villanow, and on the 8th of May into Snake Creek Gap, the head of the column passing through the defile, or nearly through it, to its mouth looking into Sugar Valley, without hearing of the enemy or firing a gun.

On the morning of the 9th, the command, with the possible exception of one division of the Fifteenth Corps, which was with the trains and unavailable, had emerged into Sugar Valley and was ready to proceed with and carry out its part of the plan. It was composed entirely of infantry and artillery,



with the exception of a small and very tired regiment of mounted infantry of about three hundred men. There must have been some good reason why no cavalry was provided, for it would be difficult to conceive of a situation in which an adequate mounted force was more plainly necessary; but whatever the situation demanded, the duty was required to be performed with infantry and artillery. The handful of dragoons, whatever their energy and usefulness in the morning, had ceased to be a factor by the time they had reached the end of their day's ride and battle and when their services would have been of almost inestimable value and importance.

As we have seen, the first act, the occupation of the Gap, had been successfully accomplished without firing a gun, and the evacuation of Dalton was a foregone conclusion. The other chapter, the seizure of the railroad and the things connected therewith, which, in all its details rested in the discretion of McPherson, remained to be performed.

The imperfect and misleading maps which were our chief if not our only sources of information, showed that the nearest point on the railroad was Resaca, that the only practicable line of march from the Gap led to that point, and that it was out in the open, eight miles away.

In Sherman's *Memoirs* it is intimated that Resaca was only three miles from the mouth of the Gap, but it was more than twice that distance. General Dodge says it was nearly nine miles; it was certainly over eight; and the road, if road it could be called, was most of the way a characteristic Georgia wagon-track, upon which the progress of an army must necessarily be slow.

This wagon-track led almost directly across the valley to Resaca and the railroad; and about fifteen miles up the railroad, and up the valley, was General Johnston and his army of fifty thousand veterans.

To reach the railroad, therefore, and effect the proposed lodgment across it, involved a march of eight tedious and uncertain miles into a *terra incognita*, with the left flank of the column wide open from start to finish. And on this exposed flank was

the enemy, almost within striking distance, whose movements were completely masked and who might be waiting at any point for the opportunity to strike. In addition to the railroad, there were certainly two available highways by which he could come rapidly down the valley: the Rome road, which crossed the line of march a few miles from the mouth of the Gap, and the Calhoun road perhaps two miles nearer Resaca. The country ahead was wholly unexplored, and what force there was in front, or on the left, or anywhere, could be ascertained only as it was developed and as the column felt its way.

Few men of discernment and a knowledge of the maxims of war could have contemplated without apprehension an attempt to solve the very difficult problem and duty which was imposed that morning upon the altogether faithful and zealous commander of the Army of the Tennessee. He knew that Dugs Gap continued to be securely sealed and that the roads leading to him from Dalton were all open to the enemy and all protected against a flank attack. He knew that Wheeler's divisions of cavalry could in a few hours ride down to him through a country they had been over many times before, and he knew that Johnston, a thoroughly trained and most efficient general, had an accurate and comprehensive knowledge of all the details of the situation. These things and much more he knew, and yet he had no choice except to act upon the hopes and expectations of his superior and go ahead.

At the earliest practicable moment, on the morning of the 9th of May, the advance of the Army of the Tennessee, consisting of the 9th Illinois mounted infantry and a regiment of infantry belonging to the Sixteenth Corps, was sent forward. As it emerged from the Gap into Sugar Valley it came in contact with Grigsby's brigade of Confederate cavalry, which upon orders from Johnston had taken position or was being formed on the Snake Creek road a short distance from the mouth of the defile.

In Sherman's *Memoirs*, we read that this brigade was encountered and that it “retreated hastily toward Dalton.” Mr. Breckinridge of Kentucky, who was with it in command of

one of the regiments of which it was composed, says that it made a vigorous resistance and skirmished heavily until late in the afternoon and until it was forced back behind the works at Resaca, where it joined the other Confederate troops there in position.

The Rome road, a highway from Dalton to Rome, and which was a short line from the enemy's position toward Snake Creek Gap, was reached by the Federal advance quite early in the day; and a reconnoissance up it toward the North was made with a few men to ascertain whether the enemy held it or were moving in force to receive us. The Sixteenth Corps, however, which had the advance, was not detained, and the Fifteenth followed as soon as it was learned that there was no sufficient reason to delay the march.

By two o'clock, or about that hour, General Sweeny's division of the Sixteenth Corps had been deployed and had reached the Calhoun road, where it was halted. General McPherson here again caused a careful reconnoissance to be made toward Dalton, and as the reconnoissance was proceeding Sweeny's division was moved forward, while Veatch's division of the same Corps was held near the cross-roads and the divisions of the Fifteenth Corps directed to close up.

Sweeny advanced, (not tardily, I think, but cautiously,) driving the enemy before him, until he occupied a favorable position, partly upon a ridge, his line extending to the right and left of the road along a creek of considerable size about a mile from Resaca and in plain sight of the Confederate works. Then, as the Fifteenth Corps came up and was massed near the cross-roads, Veatch's command was advanced with orders to connect with Sweeny's left and feel for the railroad. It may be true that one of Veatch's brigades went forward with Sweeny, but certainly one of them was detained until General Logan came up with his corps.

By the time these dispositions had been made the day was drawing toward a close. The troops had been moved with a definite purpose and without waste of time. Not as rapidly as if they had not been in the enemy's country marching by

the flank across roads which opened into his camp, and not as we might have moved if we had not been bound by every rule to find out, as best we might with infantry and artillery, whether we were being led into a trap and to our destruction. But it may be safely stated that, from the time the column started, there had been, on the part of its constantly alert commander, no want of energy and no unnecessary delay of any kind.

General Dodge has stated that it was about four o'clock when the head of Logan's Corps reached the Calhoun cross-roads. My impression is that it must have been later, for I remember seeing Fuller's men of Veatch's division going into position on Sweeny's left and that the sun behind them was not far above the tree-tops. I think there can be no doubt that it was after five o'clock when Dodge had completed, or nearly completed, his formation, and he met, or was requested to meet, McPherson and Logan to discuss the situation.

Unquestionably, as the march went on, McPherson had done the only things possible to be done with the forces at his disposal. As has been stated, he had no cavalry and the regiment of mounted infantry which he had used during the day had now, by honest and creditable work, been so much reduced that General Dodge says that when he got to the Calhoun road he could muster only eighteen men to send in search of the railroad. The eighteen weary troopers went upon their important quest, and it was after dark when they got back.

When McPherson called his lieutenants together, to consider what ought to be done, the situation was this:

The main portion of one corps, consisting of about six thousand men, was in line of battle facing Resaca and the works of the enemy, with its left in air, and the rear of its left, which was wholly unprotected, toward Dalton and the main Confederate Army. About the strength of the enemy's works, and the presence of an efficient force behind them, there was not the shadow of a doubt. The works presented a formidable appearance, and the artillery fire which was opened from them, and the sound of musketry while the Federal line was being adjusted, were too significant to be misunderstood. We now know that

General Hood was there watching our movements, and that the troops at his disposal and behind his works must have been able to hold them until dark. The Sixteenth Corps was in line facing the works, and the Fifteenth was massed at the Calhoun cross-roads, a mile away, with one brigade in line of battle anxiously looking up the unexplored and unknown valley toward General Johnston's camp.

This was the condition of things when the conference between McPherson, Logan, and Dodge took place. Everything seemed to indicate that the situation was in all its aspects a most critical one, and the views of his lieutenants were, therefore, of the greatest importance to the general in command. The recollections of those who have a knowledge of this conference differ very widely and essentially. In one of the two corps commanders, General McPherson had the greatest confidence, believing in his intelligence, sagacity, courage, and discretion ; and it has been stated, upon what I regard as very high authority, that that corps commander represented without hesitation that an assault upon the works of Resaca would inevitably fail, and I believe that the statement of this fact, which seemed to be too obvious to require any statement to make it effectual, influenced the mind of McPherson very strongly in the direction of the conservative course which he adopted.

The interchange of views between the three generals was continued for some time, and my understanding is that General McPherson left the conference, stating in substance that he would decide very soon and communicate his orders.

Be this as it may, he rode with his staff to the foot of a high hill upon the right of the Resaca road and near which the meeting had taken place. It may be that General Logan or General Dodge accompanied him. Of that I am not sure ; but we dismounted at the foot of the hill, and, leaving our horses with our orderlies, went up to the top. I distinctly remember the observation made by General McPherson, the fact that it took place during a brisk artillery fire, and that some of us thought the General's life was in danger.



The timber on the side of the hill or ridge toward Resaca had been slashed to give range to the guns, and a large stump had been left near where we had halted. Upon this stump McPherson stepped, and, raising his glass, looked intently and deliberately at the enemy's works. He was over six feet tall, and, standing on the stump, was a very conspicuous object, but he seemed to be entirely unconscious of the fact, notwithstanding the artillery practice of the enemy, which gave unmistakable evidences of experience and skill, and which was directed toward where he stood. He did not, however, change his position, but without any sign of haste concluded his observation, and, having done so, walked slowly back into the timber, where he informed his chief-of-staff, Colonel Clark, that he would not attack and that he would withdraw his army to a place of safety near the Gap. The conclusion was at once communicated to the corps commanders, and the weary unwinding of the long miles of the morning was commenced.

There were not a few officers and men in the retiring column who were sadly at a loss to understand why they had been withdrawn, apparently without having made an effort to accomplish the principal, if not the only, object of the march. They realized that they had been in line of battle, or expecting to be engaged, nearly all day, and that after they had reached the enemy and the all-important railroad, they were suddenly counter-marched and started back to the place from which they had set out.

But the colonel at the head of his regiment, however competent and intelligent he may be, rarely gets the true perspective of the general situation or understands the full significance of the duty he is called upon to perform.

As McPherson stood on the hill in front of Resaca, he was compelled either to make an attack, then and there, or withdraw his little army. There were not less than two brigades of Confederates behind the works, (which spoke for themselves,) with at least ten guns; there was less than an hour of daylight; the position of the enemy in his rear was unknown; he was eight miles from the Gap, and his army was divided into detachments.

Certainly, to make an attack under such conditions called for the exercise of a kind of military genius which General McPherson did not possess.

And if Resaca had been taken, it would have been essential to hold and watch the Rome cross-roads with one detachment, and the Calhoun cross-roads with another, which would have broken his command into three unequal parts, separated from each other by intervals of about two miles. The attack, if it had been made, could not have been concluded before dark, and the necessary result would have been that the three isolated detachments would have slept on their arms where they had fought or been posted, with the certainty of battle in the morning. It seemed to be as plain as any indisputable deduction could be, that at the break of day the enemy would be in line on the Snake Creek road and before Resaca with thirty-five thousand men. As it was, Johnston, knowing apparently the exact situation, sent Hood to Resaca, and his three divisions were placed on the cars during the night, and on the morning of the 10th were at Tilton, a few miles away, where they had been halted.

We now perceive that Johnston could have moved the main body of his army to Resaca during the night of the 9th, and that by no possibility would Thomas or Schofield have been able to get there before the chances of the inevitable battle of the 10th would have been decided.

And how uneven those chances would have been is no longer matter of conjecture. The Confederate General would have had almost every possible advantage. He would have encountered a divided force, and a very tired and hungry one, whose wagons on the unprotected road to the Gap were at the mercy of his cavalry. General Dodge tells us that on the evening of the 9th his transportation had not come up and that the men and animals of his corps had for a day and a half been without other food than they found in the poor and picked country over which they had marched. Loring's division of Polk's corps, of which corps Canty's men who were in Resaca constituted a part, was on the march near by and



reached Resaca on the 10th, and might have come directly up by the Calhoun road and made a connection with Hood and a lodgment between us and the Gap. There were contingencies too numerous to be recited, and all, or many of them, as plain to the Federal General as the fast-setting sun behind him. It has been said that genius is the capacity to perceive existing factors and to comprehend the weight and importance of each element of the situation. Whether McPherson saw and understood all the factors of which we now have knowledge, we need not seek to ascertain. His actions, I think, indicated that he did.

I remember a remark which it was my privilege to hear from his lips, which I have often thought of, and which should be preserved as a matter of record. A few days after the affair at Snake Creek Gap some allusion was made to it, and the General said, in substance, that if he had attacked Resaca, or if he had remained there, Johnston would have cut him off "as you cut off the end of a piece of tape with a pair of shears."

I did not then quite understand what he meant, but with our present information the figure is easily explained. He was eight miles out in the open with less than 20,000 men. There was a force of 50,000 of the enemy on his left and rear, and perhaps 8000 on his right and rear, with about 4000 holding the works in his front, and the roads behind him connecting the two principal bodies of the enemy were completely screened and wholly unobstructed. These were among the factors which may have influenced him when he declined to attack the force in his front and withdrew his command beyond the point of danger.

There are many other and scarcely less material facts and circumstances which point all in the same direction. The more attentively the situation and its incidents are examined, the more indisputably plain is the conclusion that McPherson's prudence and conservatism averted a most serious disaster. I think that no impartial mind, seeking the truth, can go through the details of the story of Snake Creek Gap as we have them

to-day, without being convinced that, whatever his record, he never did his country a greater service than on the evening of the 9th of May, when he took his army away from the grave and intricate dangers which surrounded it. It is not, I think, too much to say that on that day, as upon a subsequent occasion, he saved the Army of the Tennessee from utter destruction.

As we see the matter now, we realize that if Thomas with sixty thousand men had been sent through the Gap, with a logical front and a logical rear, he could have marched, with his colors flying, up the Rome or Calhoun road, and seized and held the railroad and invited battle; and the fact that Dugs Gap was in the possession of the enemy, and that Wheeler was riding down the valley, and that Johnston and Hardee and the indomitable Cleburne were all in the saddle, and coming, would have been cause for congratulation instead of dismay.

As soon as General Sherman was informed of the results of McPherson's movements and that his detachment had taken position in Snake Creek Gap, he withdrew Thomas and Schofield from in front of Dalton, leaving only the Fourth Corps and General Howard; and although Johnston had full information as to the presence of the Army of the Tennessee in the Gap, he manifested no anxiety whatever, and did not even evacuate Dalton until he had learned that the Army of the Cumberland had left his front. He then moved down the valley and took position at Resaca.

Johnston's omission to occupy and fortify Snake Creek Gap and McPherson's omission to attack Resaca were discussed by our whole army, particularly as it passed through the Gap, marching as it did within a few yards of General McPherson's tent. It was current gossip and perhaps believed that McPherson had made a most unhappy mistake, that he had failed to take advantage of a great opportunity, and it was even hinted that he was to be relieved of his command. But I think there is no evidence that General Sherman ever gave expression to anything more than his undisguised disappointment and the belief that a more aggressive course would have effected his most sanguine anticipations.

Some men would have found it impossible to bear the imputation which was not wholly unexpressed as the other armies filed by the headquarters of the Army of the Tennessee and looked for its commander. I remember when Sherman arrived. It was a trying moment for the gentle and high-strung and sensitive man, who, having done his whole duty, unselfishly, wisely, and well, could by no possibility make himself understood. Sherman rode up with his staff and as he dismounted said in substance, and not ungraciously: "Mac," or "Well, Mac, you have missed the opportunity of a lifetime," with which they went into McPherson's tent.

The development of the campaign from Resaca down to Atlanta has been lucidly and intelligently described by those who took part in it and contributed to its success. The general theory was to move Thomas up where his solid front covered Johnston's lines, and then send McPherson, or Howard at a later date, with the Army of the Tennessee, around one of his flanks and thus force him out of position. From the right flank to the left, and from the left to the right, and from the right to the left and back again, the Army of the Tennessee was thrown. It never once missed its footing, and never once failed to perform with mathematical accuracy and completeness the duty which the strategy of the campaign imposed upon it.

I pass over the events of the weeks of activity during which the two armies manœuvred, and perhaps it should be said fought, from Resaca to Atlanta. Johnston was relieved on the 17th of July and the command of the Confederates turned over to Hood. With the new commander a new policy and new tactics were at once inaugurated. Both General McPherson and General Schofield had been members of Hood's class at West Point, and he and McPherson had been intimately associated as room-mates for over a year. There was no doubt about his intelligence, ingenuity, and disposition to fight; and he was regarded on all hands as an enterprising and dangerous adversary.

On the 20th of July, three days after he assumed command,

he disclosed the course he meant to pursue, in what is known as the battle of Peach-Tree Creek, which was a spirited attack near the right of the Federal line, and which was repulsed chiefly by Hooker's corps assisted by Newton's division of the Fourth.

As the Federal lines closed in on Atlanta, the Army of the Tennessee was on the extreme left and was pushed ahead until, on the morning of the 22d, it occupied a position very near the outer line of Confederate works. As it went forward General Garrard's division of cavalry covered its exposed flank, and up to the time when it formed in front of the Confederate works Garrard held and made safe the wide gate which opened to its flank and rear.

But, on the night of the 20th, General Sherman, doubtless for what seemed to him to be good and sufficient reasons, and desiring to destroy an adjacent railroad, spirited Garrard away, thus leaving the left of McPherson's line of battle dangerously in air.

Hood was not long in discovering the removal of the Federal cavalry and the opening and opportunity thus presented. He promptly decided to move Hardee's corps of infantry and Wheeler's command of cavalry under cover of night and as rapidly as possible around the unprotected flank, until the Federal rear was reached, and then, taking us in reverse, to do all the damage possible and perhaps capture the bulk of the Army of the Tennessee. That he came painfully near accomplishing his object is a matter of history.

Very early on the morning of the 22d, McPherson received through a galloping staff officer information from Sherman that Hood was falling back, and, with the information, a strong intimation, amounting almost to an order, that preparations should be made for pursuit by roads that were indicated. McPherson hastened out to his most advanced position and made, as was his custom, a careful personal observation and reconnoissance. He soon discovered that there was no good reason to suppose that Hood meant to abandon Atlanta. On the contrary, it was plain that the enemy was industriously engaged in

strengthening his works; and that some important development was about to take place which seemed to be near at hand. Indeed, as he returned to his headquarters, General McPherson said, with great earnestness and a number of times, that he anticipated during the day an engagement such as had not taken place during the campaign.

There is no doubt that for hours, perhaps from the moment he had heard of the withdrawal of Garrard's cavalry, he had been seriously concerned about his left flank, and there is as little doubt that he had endeavored in every practicable way to strengthen it and to guard against the consequences of the impending attack.

As the Federal columns had converged toward Atlanta, Dodge's two divisions of the Sixteenth Corps (with the exception of one brigade) had been crowded out of line, and were temporarily, toward the evening of the 21st, placed in reserve near the right of the Fifteenth Corps, which was on the right of the Army of the Tennessee. These two divisions, numbering about six thousand men, were therefore available as a reserve, and General McPherson used them accordingly.

On the morning of the 22d he directed Dodge to move to the left at once and connect with the left flank of the Seventeenth Corps, and without unnecessary delay the march toward the position indicated was commenced.

Shortly after Dodge had started, and while his command was in motion, McPherson received the following characteristic order, written in pencil and in General Sherman's hand:

"Headquarters Military Div. of the Miss.,

"In the Field at Howard House,

"Near Atlanta, July 22, 1864.

"GENERAL MCPHERSON,

"Army of the Tennessee:

"General: Instead of sending Dodge to your left, I wish you would put his whole corps at work destroying absolutely the railroad back to and including Decatur. I want that road absolutely and completely destroyed; every tie and every rail twisted, and as



soon as Garrard returns, if the enemy still holds Atlanta, I will again shift you round to the extreme right with Turner's Ferry as a depot. Explore roads, etc., with that view.

"Yours,

(Signed.)

"W. T. SHERMAN,  
"Major-General."

Without countermanding his order to the Sixteenth Corps and without even halting it, McPherson immediately went to Sherman's headquarters, and upon his request the order to Dodge, just quoted, was, for the present at least, withdrawn, and the Sixteenth Corps continued its march. It moved expeditiously directly to the left, and was halted when the head of the column had reached a point something over half a mile from the extreme left, the men stretching back parallel with the line of battle of the Seventeenth Corps and perhaps a mile from it. In that position they stacked arms and rested, while the ground they were to occupy was being looked over, with a view to moving them up as soon as practicable.

But the importance of the destruction of the railroad more than the safety of his flank was still in General Sherman's mind, and at "12 M." he sent McPherson a second written order, also in pencil and in his own hand, which was in part as follows:

"As General Sweeny's division has already moved over to the left . . . you will leave his division where we designated and send Fuller's division back on the line of the railroad between here and Decatur to destroy it, as directed."

This last order McPherson sent forward, but, by reason of the interposition of destiny, or for some other cause or reason, it was never executed. If it had been carried out, the history of the Atlanta campaign would read very differently from what it does, and if that which preceded it had not been countermanded, who shall say what would have taken place?

Sherman's order to withdraw "Fuller's division" (only one

brigade of which was present, the other being at Decatur, six miles to the rear) was put in writing and placed in the hands of a staff officer, who started with it at a run, but almost before he was out of sight the impending battle, like a mighty storm, burst upon us.

Hardee and Wheeler had made their march and were swinging their troops into the Federal rear. The Confederate divisions of Cleburne, Bate, Hindman, and Walker had crossed the ground which Garrard had occupied and were moving in excellent order, confidently expecting to gather the great results of what seemed to be a complete surprise.

But, as has been intimated, McPherson's foresight, and, I think it may be said, the same prudence he had exercised at Snake Creek Gap, had marched Dodge's brigades to the left, and they had been halted and now were in line of battle exactly where they ought to be to catch and hold the advancing Confederate wave. With all possible haste the Federal column was thrown into position and turned toward the rapidly developing lines of the advancing enemy.

And on the rock of the valor of the veterans of the Sixteenth Corps the Confederate onset struck and was shattered. Beyond that rock, or over it, not all the courage and persistence of Walker, who fell early in the fight, and Bate and Hindman and their devoted officers and men could advance the Confederate line. Repeatedly they made the effort and with unsurpassed steadiness and nerve, but when the sun went down and the firing ceased, the gallant men of the Sixteenth Corps held all they had when the onset of the morning fell upon them.

To the right of Fuller, however, through the open space between him and the Seventeenth Corps, Cleburne's division of the enemy, or some part of it, passed and cut off and captured a section of a battery and part of a brigade at the extreme end of the line in front of Atlanta. And then followed in many parts of the field, a series of battles within battles, if battles they can be called, such as have few parallels in any war.

Sprague's brigade of the Sixteenth Corps had been ordered to remain at Decatur, six miles in the rear of the Fifteenth



Corps, and there performed a duty of great value and importance. Hood's plan of battle contemplated that Wheeler's cavalry should move upon Decatur, and his orders had been carried out to the letter, but as Hardee's command found the main body of the Sixteenth Corps on its front and in its way, Wheeler's cavalry met the detachment at Decatur and failed to make any impression upon it. It stubbornly held its ground against every effort until the fate of the main lines was decided and the enterprising cavalryman withdrew.

Thus the brilliant movement of the Confederate commander, which promised such important results, had failed at every point. For the second time in the campaign, the genius and discernment of McPherson had saved the Army of the Tennessee from destruction. He did not live to see and understand that just as he had done well at Snake Creek Gap he had done well in the larger and not less trying emergency in front of Atlanta. But those who are seeking the light of history will not miss the relation of the two events and their true significance.

The narrative of the 22d of July will never be written, and even the most authentic accounts we have are not likely to be fully credited. The struggle was not for position or advantage, or in any sense for to-morrow. Where the impact came, it was now and to the death—the spasmodic culmination, crisis, and end of the heat and friction of the long campaign.

Except that efforts were made to hold fast to where we stood, and occasionally to mend and better the positions of our lines, and in one or two instances to meet an approaching charge by a counter charge, the Federal Army remained upon the defensive all day. We did not fight a battle; we simply took what came as it came and where it came, feeling assured that to repulse the enemy was our all-sufficient and only duty. Some of the assaults involved the fronts of divisions, while others covered less than the fronts of brigades. The whole story—an epitome of all that took place—is told in a message which came down to the lines of battle from General Sherman. When Logan took command he sent word that he was fighting

the whole Confederate Army, and that he was pressed on every side. General Sherman listened for a moment and then said in his nervous way :

"Tell General Logan to fight 'em, fight 'em, fight 'em like hell!"

This order "fight 'em, fight 'em," was carried out; and necessity added virtue to choice, from the beginning to the end of the long, ragged, and uncertain day.

The attacks came one after another, each as spirited as that which preceded it, and each almost as well sustained as that with which the struggle began; and on parts of the Federal lines they came as often from the rear of the works as from the direction of Atlanta. But whenever they came and wherever they fell, they encountered a fortitude and devotion of equal value, and in every instance failed. For a brief interval the Fifteenth Corps was broken, but the line was soon effectually restored with a rebuke which was not likely to be forgotten. Six times during the day General Giles A. Smith, who commanded the Fourth Division of the Seventeenth Corps, rode from one side of his works to the other to receive the enemy, first from the front and then from the rear. And destiny and good-fortune fought with him, for if, moving simultaneously, Cleburne's men had come from his rear and Cheatham's men from toward Atlanta, the consequences to his lines and to the corps would have been too serious to be estimated.

The losses during the contest, which lasted for something more than six hours, were certainly without a parallel in our war. There were buried and turned over under flag of truce, in front of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps, of the enemy's dead nearly 2000, and they were almost as numerous in the rear as in the front of the works. When it is remembered that the Federal loss in killed was, at Chancellorsville about 1500, at Chickamauga less than 1700, at Stone's River 1500, and at the great battle of Gettysburg during the three days about 2800, the fierceness and desperation of this unprecedented day may be in part understood. I know that General Sherman at first declined to accept the reports which were

sent him of the enemy's loss, but he was subsequently convinced of their accuracy, and they are established by official reports and other proof which ought not to be for a moment disputed.

In every respect, the day was one which taxed, perhaps as never before, the nerve and discipline and staying powers of the veteran troops that were engaged. There were many and most thrilling incidents which took place along the lines. The things done in front of the Iowa brigade, on Bald Hill and on other parts of the field, were as dramatic as anything in the history of war.

But, of all the incidents of the long day, the most memorable and most dramatic was that which we may almost see, so complete and accurate are the descriptions of the scene which have been preserved.

A general officer of commanding presence, mounted on a spirited horse, is observing from a knoll on the right of the Sixteenth Corps its incomparable performance and the telling repulse of the enemy which is taking place. What he sees excites his admiration and unqualified commendation, but, as he looks, an urgent message reaches him telling of the development of facts which for hours have been the subject of his apprehensions—that his left flank, already in danger, is still more seriously menaced and about to be attacked.

Near him, leading directly toward the left of the Seventeenth Corps and the point of danger, there is a narrow road cut through the woods, and into that fatal road he spurs his horse, and down it at full speed.

His staff have all been sent in different directions, and he is attended by a single orderly, followed by several mounted officers whose duty takes them in the same direction. Within an hour he has been over the road; it is the only one which will take him speedily to where the pinch of the increasing battle has shifted; and every moment is of inestimable significance. Suddenly, without warning, as he rides, he comes upon an advancing skirmish line of Confederate infantry cautiously moving up the road. As quickly as possible he halts and turns

his horse toward the cover of the woods upon his right. There is one moment of hopeless silence followed by a volley; and, stricken unto death, the noble figure at which it has been aimed, rises in his stirrups, catches blindly at his horse's mane, and reels, and falls heavily to the ground.

The officer in command of the Confederate skirmishers runs hastily forward, knowing only that the volley has done its terrible work and that some prominent general has fallen. Standing over the prostrate form, he calls to one of the Federal officers, the colonel of the 78th Ohio, who has fallen and is lying near the dying chief :

“Who is this? Who is it we have shot?” he asks.

The Federal colonel had strength to answer, and what he said should hold always a place in history, as the utterance and verdict of that supreme hour and occasion :

“It's General McPherson; you've killed the best man in our army.”

Death must have taken place not many minutes after the fatal shot was fired. The enemy had possession for perhaps an hour of the woods in which the body lay, when, their lines having been retired, it was rescued by Colonel Strong and Captain Buell and removed to General Sherman's headquarters.

As the sun went down the last journey was commenced. From the field where, faithful unto death, he had yielded up the full measure of his devotion, all that remained of the man went back to the little town of Clyde. In the quiet home of his early life his remains were laid away to await, let us hope and believe, the reveille of the eternal morning and the march which lies beyond the unknown river.

Our associations and the impressions they produce cause us to discriminate and select where, perhaps, we should hesitate to do so.

Of those who rose to prominence in the West whom it was my great privilege to know, three names stand in my memory and affection above all other names: McPherson, Thomas, and C. F. Smith. They were different types, unlike each other in

temperament and intellectual qualities, but there was in each the indescribable charm of genuineness and that rare directness and simplicity of purpose which are the evidence and proof of the highest types of manhood. Their characters found no expression in words, but we read and know what they were, and how they served their country, in the lofty and imperishable records of their lives.

When we think of C. F. Smith, during the watches of the winter night which he spent on that ridge which he won at Fort Donelson, we understand and realize the grandeur of "that high scorn which laughs at earthly fears." More courtly knight and gentleman never rode to battle or gave up his life—for it was his life he gave—with less hesitation and less thought or desire of recognition or reward. What he did was to him a simple duty, the duty in effect to die; and he performed it with all the grace and ease and ceremony with which he saluted the colors on review.

And how shall we measure or define the value of Thomas at Chickamauga! What grander spectacle is there in history than the serious figure, standing unmoved and unmovable, holding his army to its duty, until it shared his fortitude and stood with him! There were many on the trying field who were as ready as he was to do their full duty, and who did their full duty and much more. But the faith and patience and individuality and composure of that unselfish and heroic man are the apples of gold of the picture.

In the story of McPherson's blameless life, we find the same exalted sense of responsibility, the same single-hearted subordination of himself and all his interests, the same sublime and unfailing loyalty to the noblest impulses of which man is capable. No one can turn to the record he has left without feeling that he added something to that which is best in the history of war, and made plainer the duty which we owe to our country and ourselves.

His career may be likened to the record of a cloudless day. It rose and ran its course, complete in every hour; and it closed, abruptly but unbroken, when he fell, without color of



blemish or reproach, in the hour of his greatest service and without an enemy.

But the light and inspiration of his day remain to us, like a fixed and silent star, which in the years to come shall lose not its high place and value in the firmament, but lift men's minds and hearts toward higher aims and nobler purposes.

IN COMMEMORATION OF GENERAL WILLIAM  
TECUMSEH SHERMAN.

April 6, 1892.

COMPANIONS to the number of four hundred took their places at the tables at 8:30 o'clock; Brevet Major-General Wager Swayne, U. S. A. (retired), Commander, presiding. At the conclusion of the banquet, the Commander called the Companions to order, and made the following remarks:

The Commander, introducing Senator Sherman, said:

*Companions:* You may remember that a good while ago, and at the time of a very great excitement in the religious world, an eminent clergyman, son of a clergyman still more eminent, received a mortal injury in a threshing machine; and, as his life was ebbing away, he said to his father, "Father, stand up for Jesus," and that father came back to his charge straightway in St. George's Church, in this city, and preached a memorable sermon commemorative of that son. It was felt at that time that it had been long since any father had lost such a son, and long since any son had departed leaving a father who could so commemorate him. Reminded of that incident by the circumstances of this day, I venture to say in your behalf, to our distinguished guest, that I know no other brother dying who had left behind him such a brother to commemorate him, and I know no one else who has had such a brother to commemorate. I venture to say further in your behalf, that such a tribute is not inappropriate to this company. General Sherman himself was one of us, and often here among us. You may remember his saying, not long before his death, that when



he was planning the march to the sea, he was on the lookout for two vigorous and capable young men to take charge of his right and left wings, and those vigorous and capable men, Generals Slocum and Howard, are here. Many of us can remember, as the long march stretched out one line towards Atlanta, the suspense we felt over the continuity of that daily lengthening line of railroad. General Sherman depended for the maintenance and operation of that railroad upon General Dodge, and General Dodge is here. Some of you know that he came very near not being here. On the 19th of May, 1864, I saw him in his tent, surrounded by his staff, and with a bullet hole square in the middle of his forehead. It has ever since been a puzzle to me, perhaps you can help me solve it, whether the deflection of that bullet around under his scalp was occasioned by its contact with a compactness of eight years of Pacific Railroad surveys, or whether it is more reasonable to suppose that bullet fled in dismay at the prospect of the enormous contemplated expenditures for railway construction which the interior of his cranium disclosed, and which have since been made. I might go on, Companions, down the list in point of rank and time, till I came near to my own heart, and might recall the day when General Sherman, in the midst of a great campaign, found time to sit down and write a long, kind letter to a father whose boy had been hurt the day before. Sometimes it is a little thing, the smallest thing, that shows the greatest mind, precisely as the perfection of a great engine is most clearly shown by the smallness of the lever that will start its operation. It is better to forbear.

To introduce Senator Sherman to you with comments introductory of him, would be a travesty on introductions. It is enough that he is here. Let me present him to you.

#### REMARKS OF SENATOR SHERMAN.

*Mr. Commander and Gentlemen of the Loyal Legion :*

It is a delicate task for me to respond to your invitation to speak in honor of the memory of General Sherman. I did

not fully appreciate this when I accepted the invitation of your Commander, General Swayne. He and I often, in the freedom of personal friendship and intercourse, have talked of the traits and characteristics of leading actors in our Civil War, and especially of General Sherman, to whom each of us was bound by the strongest ties : he by intimate association, by the warm friendship that had existed between his father and mine, and by the closer ties of comradeship in war ; and I by the natural ties of brothers associated during all our lives in the most intimate confidence and affection. It is one thing to talk with a personal friend about incidents in the life of a man of such varied adventure and experience as General Sherman, but it is quite another thing to present to an audience, even of his comrades, however partial they may be, the just measure of praise due to his memory, without seeming to derogate from the equal or higher praise due to his associates. As to the merits and services of General Sherman as a soldier, I am not a competent judge. His standing as such will rest mainly upon the opinions of his comrades and the official record of events now being gathered into volumes too numerous and large to be read, except by the compiler and proof-reader. All I can do is to recall some personal incidents and traits illustrative of his life from boyhood to old age.

He was born on the 8th day of February, 1820. He was three years and three months older than I, and, therefore, was always to me an elder brother. Among my earliest recollections, and the saddest, was the sudden death of my father, at the age of forty, when on duty away from home as Judge of the Supreme Court of Ohio, leaving eleven children, the eldest about to graduate in college, and the youngest an infant. General Sherman was then nine years old—a red-headed boy, active and alert, but easily moved by sympathy or passion. My father shared the poverty then general in Ohio, and left to his children only an honorable reputation and great popularity for his generous and social qualities. These especially endeared him to the members of the bar in Ohio. Necessity soon compelled the partial breaking up of the family.

"Cump," as we called him, entered the family of Hon. Thomas Ewing, then, or soon after, a Senator of the United States, and had the benefit of the kindness, assistance, and affection of Mr. Ewing and his family to as full a degree as his own children. By his influence, William Tecumseh Sherman was appointed in July, 1836, a cadet at West Point, and there laid the foundation for his military career. About a year later, I, at the age of fourteen, was employed as a junior rodman on the Muskingum Improvement. Soon after commenced a correspondence between us which continued until within a week of his death, only interrupted when the thread of our lives brought us together at Washington. It is in this correspondence, carefully preserved, relating to every material event of his life, that are to be found the opinions and motives that guided him in every period of his career, and is the basis of what I have to say to-night.

General Sherman, as many of you know, was a copious and rapid writer, writing almost as rapidly as he spoke, and rarely correcting his manuscript. He was a careful observer, and a great reader. His mind was stored with information upon a variety of subjects, especially of topography, geography, and history, and his language, whether written or spoken, was a flowing and transparent river, revealing his inmost thoughts without caution or concealment. Remember that this correspondence commenced when the United States charged twenty-five cents for conveying a letter; and twenty-five cents was then a much larger sum than it appears to be now. Letters with us were a serious matter, and every part of the sheet was literally covered. The extravagance of an envelope doubled the postage and was rarely used.

Cadet Sherman graduated at West Point in the summer of 1840. After a brief visit to Ohio he was ordered to Florida to take part in the Indian War. He remained in the South until 1846, stationed mainly at Fort Moultrie, in Charleston Bay, and at the Augusta Arsenal, in Georgia. It was during this time, when sent on official duty in connection with Indian accounts through several States, he became familiar with the

region from Chattanooga to Atlanta, knowledge of great service to him during his campaign of 1864. His letters during this period gave a very interesting and friendly view of life in the South—of the social habits of the people, of the kindly relation between the whites and the blacks. He had a strong prejudice against Abolitionists, who, he said, would disturb the peace of the country to carry out Utopian views.

On the approach of the Mexican War, Lieutenant Sherman was ordered to Pittsburg on recruiting duty, but was so impatient to join the army, then gaining laurels in Mexico, that he applied in rather an abrupt manner for leave to join his company, but the result was he was sent with another company around Cape Horn to California, to take and occupy that distant territory of Mexico until the result of the war should determine its ownership. The story of the long voyage, the occupancy of California, the quarrels between Kearny and Fremont, the discovery of gold by Marshall, and the vast and heterogeneous migration to the gold-fields, is well told in General Sherman's *Memoirs*, very much as it was told to me in letters. The first detailed authentic account of the great discovery made known in Ohio was in a letter from Captain Sherman, which was received with incredulity, and many came from far and near to see his letters and have assurance from some one they knew that an industrious man could earn an ounce of gold or more in a day.

[In a letter dated Monterey, August 24, 1848, he says: "Gold in immense quantities has been discovered. All the towns and farms are abandoned, and nobody left on the coast but us soldiers; and, now that the New York Volunteers are disbanded, there remain in service but two companies. Our men are all deserting, as they can earn by so doing in one day more than a soldier's pay for a month. Everything is high in price; beyond our reach; and not a nigger in California but gets more pay than us officers. Of course, we are running into debt merely to live. I have not been so hard up in my life, and really see no way of extricating myself. All others here in the service of the United States are as badly off. Even Colonel Mason himself has been compelled to



assist in cooking his own meals. Merchants are making fortunes, for gold, such as I send you, can be bought at eight or ten dollars an ounce, and goods command prices thirty times higher than in New York. . . . This gold is found in the beds of streams, in dry quarries ; in fact, mingled with the earth over a large extent of the country, and the whole cannot be extracted in centuries. I have not the least doubt that five or six millions of dollars have already been extracted, and men are now getting, from their individual labor, from five thousand to eight thousand dollars a month. This is not fiction. It is truth. I went with Governor Mason and saw the evidence of it myself.”]

This, coming at a time when all industries in the States were stagnant and unprofitable, led active young men of every condition to drop the shovel and the hoe, their law books, and all the diversified employments of life, and to undertake, without suitable preparation, a long and wearisome journey in the hope of growing suddenly rich in this new El Dorado. It created the same feverish anxiety and perilous adventure that followed the discovery of America by Columbus, but results were more rapid and marvellous, and ultimately led to our Civil War, and the occupation and development of the vast region now embraced in the United States of America.

General Sherman shared in the ups and downs of this adventurous period. While an officer in the United States Army his daily pay became insufficient to buy a dinner. His servant deserted him to earn ten dollars a day. To make a living he was allowed leave of absence, and earned as a surveyor ten times as much as his pay as an officer. In two or three years he was compelled to resign his commission in order to support his family, and embarked in banking. After remarkable success he had to weather the storm of a general panic which broke the strongest banks in San Francisco. He saved the credit of his house by the sacrifice of all its earnings. At the request of General Wool and the Governor of California he undertook to put down the Vigilance Committee, who, without and against law, assumed to hang people without trial, but was prevented from the attempt by the refusal of the author-

ities to furnish arms and ammunition. He turned from banking to the law. I cannot say he was a success in this adventure. He was soon called to the head of a military institution in the State of Louisiana. This gave him an employment suited to his active temperament. He soon gained the confidence and support of all persons connected with the institution. He seemed to have reached in his adventurous career a haven of rest, when, without any fault of his, he was compelled to choose his side in the great tragedy of our Civil War. He inherited from his Revolutionary ancestors a love for liberty and union, one and inseparable, now and forever. He was born in Ohio, where the first lesson of patriotism was love for the Union. He was educated as a soldier to fight for his Country. All his instincts, tendencies, and convictions were for the supremacy of National authority. He had lived in many States, but to him they were only parts of one great Nation. He had no pride in, or hate for, any section, and he belonged to no political party. He had cherished friends in both parties and in all sections. When, therefore, he was compelled to choose his side in the Civil War, is it any wonder that he was, without question or doubt, without a shadow of turning, on the side of the Union? Secession would destroy the Union, and therefore he was opposed to secession.

It is certain he did not enter into the military service on account of slavery. His sympathies and friendships were largely with the South. In a letter dated November 30, 1854, congratulating me upon my election as a Member of Congress, he says :

“As a young member, I hope you will not be too forward, especially on the question of slavery, which it seems is rising every year more and more into a question of real danger, notwithstanding the compromises. Having lived a good deal in the South, I think I know practically more of slavery than you do. If it were a new question no one would contend for introducing it, but it is an old and historical fact that you must take as you find it.”

In another letter, of the date of March 20, 1856, he says :

“The slavery question is forced on you in spite of yourself. Time and facts are accomplishing all you aim at—viz., the preponderance of the free over the slave States. This is so manifest that the politicians and people of the South feel it, and consequently are touchy and nervous. Of course you will vote as you think right, but should you have occasion to speak, do not imitate Giddings or Seward. . . . The repeal of the compromise was unfortunate, but being done, to repeal it would only produce feeling and no good. Kansas will be a free State ; so will Missouri and Kentucky in time. But the way to accomplish that is to let things go on as now, showing the eminent prosperity of the free States, while the slave States get along slowly.”

He acknowledged no fealty to any party, and, like General Grant, he voted for President but once, and then acknowledged he had made a mistake. He had an idea, too common, I think, among the graduates of West Point, that there was something, inherently wrong in politics. In his *Memoirs* he states his defence of me in Louisiana against the vague charge of being an “Abolitionist.” He came to Ohio to hear me speak, and returned to Louisiana only partially satisfied with my position, which was substantially that of Lincoln and Corwin : against interference with slavery in the States, but opposed to the extension of slavery into the Territories.

The motive that led him into the war was his intense patriotism. This was the most striking trait of his character. The evils of slavery, the dictates of party, and the hope of promotion had no influence with him. The seizure of the arms and arsenals of the United States at Baton Rouge on the 10th of January, 1861, the forced surrender of Captain Haskin’s company of artillery, the transfer of some of the arms to the military academy in charge of General Sherman, making him the receiver of stolen goods, and these goods the property of the United States, fired his blood, aroused his patriotism, and forced him to take his stand. On the 18th of January, 1861, before the ordinance of secession by Louisiana or the capture of the forts below New Orleans, he sent to the Governor of Louisiana a letter which, though often published, cannot be



omitted in the briefest sketch of his life. I read from a letter he wrote me on the same day :

“LOUISIANA STATE SEMINARY OF LEARNING AND MILITARY  
ACADEMY.

“ALEXANDRIA, January 18, 1861.

“DEAR BROTHER :

“Before receiving yours of the 7th, I addressed a letter to Governor Moore at Baton Rouge, of which this is a copy :

“‘SIR. As I occupy a *quasi*-military position under the laws of this State, I deem it proper to acquaint you that I accepted such position when Louisiana was a State in the Union, and when the motto of this Seminary was inscribed in marble over the main door : “By the liberality of the General Government. *The Union esto perpetua.*”

“‘Recent events foreshadow a great change, and it becomes all men to choose. If Louisiana withdraws from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the old Constitution as long as a fragment of it survives, and my longer stay here would be wrong in every sense of the word. In that event I beg that you will send or appoint some authorized agent to take charge of the arms and munitions of war here belonging to the State ; or advise me what disposition to make of them.

“‘And furthermore, as President of the Board of Supervisors, I beg you to take immediate steps to relieve me as superintendent the moment the State determines to secede, for on no earthly account will I do any act or think any thought hostile to or in defiance of the old Government of the United States.

“‘With respect, etc.,

“‘W. T. SHERMAN.’”

. . . . .

In his letters to me he expresses his deep regret for the course of events which involved his separation from General Bragg, and his many friends in the South, his clear perception that the inevitable results of secession would be war or a dishonored flag and a broken Union, and his resolve that, come

what may, he would do all that one trained soldier could do for the old Union and Constitution.

He came to Washington in March, 1861, to advise the authorities of the condition of affairs in Louisiana, and to offer his services. He was amazed at the apathy he found. I went with him to President Lincoln. I heard the conversation between them. General Sherman referred to the fact that he was educated at West Point; that he had recently come from Louisiana. He stated the condition of affairs there, and that he felt it to be his duty to tender his services to the President for any military position for which he was deemed fitted. The President said he hoped that they would not need soldiers; that he thought they could keep house. What was said by Mr. Lincoln was kindly meant, but it had an unpleasant effect on General Sherman, who was deeply impressed with the gravity of the situation. When he left he said to me, "These men are sleeping on a volcano, but I have done my duty." He went to St. Louis and became president of a street railroad.

His letters at this period exhibit the excited state of his mind. The rapid drift of events; the firing on Fort Sumter; the defence of that post by his old friend and associate, Major Anderson; the ordinances of secession of State after State; the call for three-months regiments, which he denounced as imbecility; and the contemptuous refusal of his offer of service, left him like Achilles in his wrath, and Coriolanus in his banishment. An effort was made by General Frank Blair to have him raise a regiment. I appealed to him to come to Ohio and accept a command, but he wrote he "would not act with three-months volunteers; he would not identify himself with a partisan Government. . . . The first movements of our Government will fail and the leaders will be cast aside." He did not stipulate for rank or pay, but he wanted assurance of an "army" and not a militia muster. No doubt he was impatient and irritable. He had a clearer and better view of the great task before this country than any of us, and was violent and intolerant with the politicians, and especially with the newspapers of the day with their "On to Richmond"

cry. But there was not the slightest abatement of his zeal in the cause of the Union, or his determination to uphold it, and to fight for it.

When the call for three-year regiments was made, and especially when the new regular regiments were proposed, the doubts of General Sherman disappeared. On the 8th day of May, 1861, he wrote to Mr. Cameron, the Secretary of War, tendering his services in the capacity for which he was trained, closing with these words: "Should my services be needed, the records of the War Department will enable you to designate the station in which I can render best service." He was soon after appointed Colonel of the 13th Infantry, one of the new three-battalion regiments, and ordered to Washington. Pending the recruitment of his regiment he was attached to General Scott's staff as Inspector-General.

I was then with General Patterson on his way to Hagerstown. General Sherman wrote me that there was with us an "A No. 1 man, George H. Thomas, Colonel 2d Cavalry. Say to him I wish all the success that he aspires to; and, if in the varying changes of war the opportunity offers, I would name him for a high place." He adds: "But Thomas is a Virginian from near Norfolk, and, say what we may, he must feel unpleasant at leading an invading army. But, if he says he will do it, he will do it well."

Soon after, General Sherman visited me at a village on the banks of the Potomac, and he and General Thomas, his classmate and friend, with a large map of the United States spread out before them on the floor, discussed in my presence the probabilities of the war, and they agreed that Richmond, Chattanooga, and Nashville were the great strategic points. The sagacity with which these two soldiers pointed out the theatres of future operations in which they were to take so important a part is worthy of notice.

His part in the battle of Bull Run was creditable, and the general result proved that his estimate of raw troops was correct. He was soon after transferred, as second to General Robert Anderson, to the Kentucky campaign. There again

he encountered the hostility of the newspaper press and the civil authorities, who could not comprehend the gravity of the war in which we were engaged.

They regarded his demand for sixty thousand troops to justify an advance through Kentucky into Tennessee as ridiculous, and denounced him as crazy when he said that two hundred thousand troops would be required to open up the Mississippi from its source to its mouth. I knew full well that this charge was false, and understood better than any one else his strong opinions as to the nature of the war, and how easily his frank and open, but true, declarations could be used as an evidence of timidity or even insanity. Though then engaged in recruiting a brigade, I went to Louisville and found him cool and self-possessed, but very willing to be relieved from that command, and to turn over his forces to General Buell.

In a letter to Hon. Thomas Ewing, soon after, he wrote :

“ Among the keenest feelings of my life is that arising from a consciousness that you will be mortified beyond measure at the disgrace which has befallen me by the announcement in the *Cincinnati Commercial* that I am insane.

You can appreciate how keenly he felt this insult when it wrung from him such language as this. Then follows a clear and very interesting statement of the situation in Kentucky, and the ground of his opinion, which, though scoffed at the time, was promptly acted upon by the speedy collection along the line of the Ohio River of a larger force under Grant and Buell than General Sherman claimed to be necessary. He closes this letter with this paragraph :

“ There is no doubt my mind is deeply moved by an estimate of strength and purpose on the part of our enemies much higher than the Government or people believe to be true. I am perfectly willing to leave its solution to time, and will be much relieved to find I am wholly wrong. I will stay here until next week and return to St. Louis, but feel certain this paragraph will be widely circulated and will impair my personal influence for much time to come, if not always.”

The drift of events soon gave General Sherman an opportunity to demonstrate his sanity. The battle of Shiloh gave the country assurance of his fighting qualities. It was one of the most severely contested battles of the war. The chief force of the attack fell upon his division on the first day, but he held the front line of the Union forces facing the enemy until night closed upon that gloomy day; and was the first to advance on the enemy in the morning, and soon re-occupied his old camp and led the pursuit of the retreating foe. His part in this battle is thus stated by General Halleck in a dispatch to Secretary Stanton, dated Pittsburg, Tenn.:

"It is the unanimous opinion here that Brigadier-General W. T. Sherman saved the fortunes of the day on the 6th, and contributed largely to the glorious victory of the 7th. He was in the thickest of the fight on both days, having three horses killed under him, and being wounded twice. I respectfully request that he be made a Major-General of Volunteers, to date from the 6th inst."

Here commenced his friendship with General Grant, which, like that of Damon and Pythias, has been made the subject of story and of song. It is one of the most interesting incidents of the war, and continued unbroken while both lived. The campaign of Vicksburg was the work of General Grant, to whom General Sherman awards all the credit. In a letter dated the 29th of May, 1863, he says:

"General Grant is entitled to all the merit of its conception and execution."

But General Grant, with chivalrous kindness, insisted that he was indebted to General Sherman, General McPherson, and other leading officers for the success of that campaign.

In a letter of the date of March 24, 1864, at about the time General Grant was ordered to Washington, General Sherman writes to me:

"Give Grant all the support you can. If he can escape the toils of the schemers he may do some good. He will fight, and the Army of the Potomac will have all the fighting they want. He will expect



your friendship. We are close friends. His simplicity and modesty are natural and not affected."

It would be interesting to follow General Sherman from Vicksburg to the sea, but the story is familiar to all. General Sherman always regarded his march from Memphis to Chattanooga and the battle of Chattanooga as among the most important incidents of his life. The march from Chattanooga to Atlanta was an almost continuous battle for near one hundred days, and was most difficult and dangerous. The general public have regarded the march from Atlanta to the sea with greater interest from the novelty of the movement, but in fact it was an easy task, with little resistance or loss. During two weeks of this march, when nothing was heard from General Sherman, there was a feeling of anxiety and alarm. The accounts from Confederate sources described him as being attacked and defeated, and there was deep anxiety. Sharing this feeling I went to Mr. Lincoln, hoping that he had some intelligence. Upon my inquiring he said: "Oh, no, we have heard nothing from him. We know what hole he went in, but we don't know what hole he will come out of." It was a joyful Christmas Day in the North when General Sherman was safe on the shores of the Atlantic, and announced that "Savannah is ours." The march from Savannah to Goldsboro was a much more difficult undertaking. It was in the winter and spring, when the country was flooded and the roads were difficult. It was then that your Commander, who hears me, lost his leg. With the approach of General Sherman towards Richmond, it was manifest that the last days of the Confederacy were drawing near. When he reached Goldsboro he received word that the President desired to meet him at Hampton Roads. He went, and held the famous interview with President Lincoln, Grant, and Porter. There was then absolute confidence of the overthrow of the Rebellion. Lincoln, full of charity and loving-kindness, was studying over the best mode of closing the war and restoring the old Union. General Sherman telegraphed me at Washington to accompany him on his return to Goldsboro. I did so, taking



with me young Mr. Stanton, the son of the Secretary. On the steamer and on the railroad General Sherman was continually speaking of his interview with Mr. Lincoln, and of his plans for reconstruction. There was no secrecy or doubt about them. They had been openly avowed in the presence of the chief actors in the war. When General Johnston proposed to surrender, the conversation with Lincoln was fresh in the mind of General Sherman, and I know that he believed that in agreeing to the terms of surrender he was carrying out the policy outlined by Mr. Lincoln. He could not know, however, that the brutal murder of Mr. Lincoln had aroused in the minds of the Northern people a deep feeling of resentment, which would not tolerate the liberal terms granted to Johnston and the remnant of the rebel forces. The fatal bullet shot by Booth had changed the whole situation. A strong belief existed that Davis and other leaders in the Rebellion were implicated in the murder. No one but Lincoln could have secured to the revolting States the terms of surrender and reconstruction that he was willing to grant. But for this desperate act the whole history of reconstruction would have been reversed. General Sherman believed in and sought to carry out the policy of Mr. Lincoln. The terms of surrender were tentative, and the conditions were entirely subject to the supervision of the executive authorities, but instead of being submitted to the generous and forgiving patriot who had fallen, they were passed upon in the shadow of a great crime, by stern and relentless enemies, who would not have consented to the conditions imposed by General Grant upon General Lee, and who would have disregarded them had not General Grant threatened to resign upon their refusal to carry out his terms. When the arrangement with General Johnston was submitted to President Johnson and Mr. Stanton, it was rejected with the insulting intimation that it proceeded from either cowardice or treachery. The old cry against General Sherman was again started. It was even imputed that he would attempt to play the part of a Cromwell or military usurper. The generous kindness of Grant came to his relief, new terms were agreed upon, and the war closed.

It seemed to be the fate of General Sherman that when he was most clearly right, tested by subsequent events, he was deemed to be clearly wrong. His services were rejected when he urged prompt action. He was adjudged insane when his mind was most clear, and was deemed false to his trust at the close of the war, when he endeavored to carry out the policy and instructions of Abraham Lincoln.

I close this brief and imperfect reference to the military services of General Sherman with the pageant that will be forever engraved upon my memory, and be preserved in history as one of the most imposing military demonstrations of all times. A review of the Union armies was ordered on the 24th and 25th days of May, 1865. Then were gathered in Washington over two hundred thousand real soldiers, thoroughly disciplined, and equal to any that ever marched in a Roman triumph, composed of two armies, who, fighting in the same cause in distant fields of operation, had never met before, and who were about to be reviewed by vast masses of their countrymen in commemoration of the closing scenes of a memorable war.

General Sherman took a deep interest in this pageant, especially in the appearance and conduct of the troops he had so long commanded. The only cry of exultation I ever heard him utter was when he mounted his horse to take his place at the head of the line on the second day of the review. Speaking for himself and his army, he said, "This is our day." He was then in the prime of manhood, forty-five years old, and felt that his place in history and in the hearts of his countrymen was secure. He proudly rode along the length of Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House, receiving the acclamations of, and covered with flowers by, a grateful people, and was received by the President and General Grant surrounded by an enthusiastic multitude of patriotic citizens.

After the war General Sherman quietly resumed the employments of peace. By the election of General Grant as President he became General; but the General of the Army in peace is the Secretary of War, who is presumed not to know

anything about war, but something about contracts for supplies. General Sherman had but little to do, and chafed for want of employment. He became deeply interested in the Grand Army of the Republic and the Loyal Legion. He attended their meetings, and soon formed the habit of making short speeches to soldiers, and thus developed a talent for speaking. This was natural, for he was always an interesting talker, but I do not remember his ever making a speech before the war. In his later years, while residing in this city, he spoke often and well upon many subjects. Politics he carefully avoided. He was urged to accept a nomination for President, but he would not listen to it. When I had an inclination that way, he remonstrated: "Why, John, they will kill you; they killed Harrison, they killed Taylor and Lincoln and Garfield, and will kill you." It was useless to tell him that some people were killed in war, and that the Presidency was not necessarily fatal. To him political life had no pleasing aspect; but all forms of social life, conversation, travel, theatres, cards—without gambling, which he abhorred,—dancing, lectures, reading, literary and scientific pursuits, all forms of study and amusement, gave him pleasure and occupation. His presence was demanded at weddings, funerals, and reunions. His whole life since his retirement was under the public gaze, and when at the age of seventy-one, after a brief illness, he died in this city, its whole population in silence and sadness watched his funeral train, and a countless multitude in every city, town, and hamlet on the long road to St. Louis expressed their sorrow and sympathy. His mortal remains were received by the people of that city, among whom he had lived for many years, with profound respect, and there he was buried by the side of his wife and the children who had gone before him.

And here I might end, but there are certain traits and characteristics of General Sherman upon which I can and ought to speak with greater knowledge and confidence than of his military career. He was distinguished, first of all, from his early boyhood for his love and veneration for and obedience to his mother. There never was a time—since his appointment

as a cadet to her death—that he did not insist upon sharing with her his modest pay, and gave to her most respectful homage and duty. It is hardly necessary in this presence to refer to his devotion to his wife, Ellen Ewing Sherman. They were born in neighboring households, reared from childhood in the same family, early attached and pledged to each other, married when he reached the grade of captain, shared in affection and respect the joys and sorrows of life, and paid the last debt to Nature within a few months of each other. The same affection and care were bestowed upon his children. Many of his comrades will recall the visit of his wife and his son Willie, a lad of thirteen, at his camp on the Big Black, after the surrender of Vicksburg. Poor Willie believed he was a sergeant in the 13th United States Infantry. He sickened and died at Memphis on his way home. No one who read it but will remember the touching tribute of sorrow his father wrote, a sorrow that was never dimmed, but was often recalled while life lasted.

General Sherman always paid the most respectful attention to women in every rank and condition of life—the widow and the orphan, the young and the old. While he was often stern and abrupt to men, he was always kind and gentle to women, and he received from them the homage they would pay to a brother. His friendship for Grant I have already alluded to, but it extended in a lesser degree to all his comrades, especially those of West Point. No good soldier in his command feared to approach him to demand justice, and every one received it if in his power to grant it. He shared with them the hardships of the march and the camp, and he was content with the same ration given to them. Simple in his habits, easy of approach, considerate of their comfort, he was popular with his soldiers, even when exacting in his discipline. The name of “Uncle Billy,” given to him by them, was the highest evidence of their affection.

He was the most unselfish man I ever knew. He did not seek for high rank, and often expressed doubts of his fitness for high command. He became a warm admirer of Abraham

Lincoln as the war progressed, and more than once expressed to him a desire for subordinate duty. He never asked for promotion, but accepted it when given. His letters to me are full of urgent requests for the promotion of officers who rendered distinguished services, but never for his own. When the bill for the retirement of officers at the age of sixty-three was pending, he was excepted from its operation. He telegraphed me, insisting that no exception should be made in his favor, that General Sheridan should have the promotion and rank of General, which he had fairly earned. This was granted, but Congress with great kindness continued to General Sherman the full pay of a General when he was placed on the retired list.

In his business relations he was bound by a scrupulous sense of honor and duty. I never knew of him doing anything which the most exacting could say was dishonorable, a violation of duty or right. I could name many instances of this trait, which I will not, but one or two cases will suffice. When a banker in California, several of his old army friends, especially from the South, trusted him with their savings for investment. He invested their money in good faith in what were considered the very best securities in California, but when Page, Bacon, & Co., and nearly every banker in San Francisco, failed in 1855, all securities were dishonored, and many of them became worthless. General Sherman, though not responsible in law or equity for a loss that common prudence could not foresee, yet felt that he was "in honor" bound to secure from loss those who had confided in him, and used for that purpose all, or nearly all, of his own savings.

So, in the settlements of his accounts in Louisiana, when he had the entire control of expenditures, he took the utmost care to see that every dollar was accounted for. He resigned on the 18th of January, and waited until the 23d of February for that purpose. The same exact accountability was practised by him in all accounts with the United States. In my personal business relations with him I found him to be exact and particular to the last degree, insisting always upon paying fully



every debt, and his share of every expense. I doubt if any man living can truly say that General Sherman owes him a dollar, while thousands know he was generous in giving in proportion to his means. He had an extreme horror of debt and taxes. He looked upon the heavy taxes now in vogue as in the nature of confiscation, and in some cases sold his land, rapidly rising in value, because the taxes assessed seemed to him unreasonable.

While the war lasted, General Sherman was a soldier intent upon putting down what he conceived to be a causeless rebellion. He said that war was barbarism that could not be refined, and the speediest way to end it was to prosecute it with vigor to complete success. When this was done, and the Union was saved, he was for the most liberal terms of conciliation and kindness to the Southern people. All enmities were forgotten; his old friendships were revived. Never since the close of the war have I heard him utter words of bitterness against the enemies he fought, nor the men in the North who had reviled him.

To him it was a territorial war, one that could not have been avoided. Its seeds had been planted in the history of the Colonies, in the Constitution itself, and in the irrepressible conflict between free and slave institutions. It was a war by which the South gained, by defeat, enormous benefits, and the North, by success, secured the strength and development of the Republic. No patriotic man of either section would willingly restore the old conditions. Its benefits are not confined to the United States, but extend to all the countries of America. Its good influence will be felt by all the nations of the world, by opening to them the hope of free institutions. It is one of the great epochs in the march of time, which, as the years go by, will be, by succeeding generations of freemen, classed in importance with the discovery of America and our Revolutionary War. It was the good fortune of General Sherman to have been a chief actor in this great drama, and to have lived long enough after its close to have realized and enjoyed the high estimate of his services by his comrades, by



his countrymen, and by mankind. To me, his brother, it is a higher pride to know and to say to you that in all the walks of private life—as a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a soldier, a comrade, or a friend—he was an honorable gentleman, without fear and without reproach.

The Commander :—The Constitution of this Military Order affirmatively shows that we believe in the resurrection of the dead. The saddest aspect of this meeting are these commemorative services. I trust we may cherish the thought that the love we have enjoyed in knowing General Sherman o'ercasts us now ; God bless his memory !

I have a little pamphlet at home, which General Sherman wrote mainly for the use of the cadets at West Point. There is written on it, in his handwriting, beneath my name : “ I think you will find this will repay perusal. W. T. S.” I have marked inside this paragraph : “ Of the qualities which adorn the human character, that which is easiest of accomplishment, and most certain of reward, is fidelity to trust.” When it was my lot, a year or two before he died, to travel with him for a time, at his request, I marvelled to see that he never came into contact with any man in whom he did not take an interest, and thinking over it to reach the root of it, I came to see, or thought I saw, that he regarded his whole relation to mankind as one great trust ; and so it was that beginning with the trust of his relation to his mother, and ending with the trust of his relations to his friends, like us, through all and in all he was fidelity to trust, to the great trust of the great Truster of mankind, who has left in our hands, as a great trust, the destiny of one another here, to prepare for the welcome that we may one day share with him, I trust.

And now, Companions, “ Bring the good old bugle, boys, we 'll sing another song.”

The Commandery thereupon sang with great enthusiasm, “ Marching through Georgia.”

On the motion of Companion Lieutenant-Colonel A. M. Clark, a vote of thanks was tendered to Senator Sherman, for his paper upon General Sherman, and he was requested to fur-

nish a copy of the address for preservation among the records of the Commandery.

Companion Second Lieutenant Charles Roberts recited the following poem :

WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN.

(Died February 14, 1891.)

BY CHARLES DE KAY.

Rumble and grumble, ye drums,  
Shrill be your throat, O pipes !  
Writhe, blood-red flag, in your mourning band,  
Serpent of harlequin stripes !  
But—stars in the banner's blue !  
Smile, for the war-chief true  
Up from the myriad hearts of the land  
Comes—to your haven comes.

Guns that sullenly boom,  
Mourn for the master's hand,  
Dreadful, uplifting the baton of war,  
While your hurricane shook the land.  
Marching, marching, thro' battle and raid,  
Gay and garrulous, unafraid,  
Sherman drove, with his brilliant star,  
A dragon of eld to its doom.

Pass, O shade without stain !  
Sunsets that grimly smile,  
Shall paint how your signal flags deploy  
Battalions mile on mile—  
Horsemen and footmen, rank on rank,  
Sweeping against the foemen's flank,  
Howling full of the strange, mad joy  
Of slaughter, and fear to be slain.

Orators, thunder and rave !  
Chant ye his dirge, O bards !  
Ho, cunning sculptors, his charger design,  
Grave ye his profile on sards !

But to picture the hero's brain—  
Shall ye ever thereto attain?  
Can ye utter the soul of the long blue line,  
And the tongue-tied love of the slave?

Rumble and grumble, ye drums!  
Strain in your throat, O pipes!  
Last of the warriors of oak, that were hewn  
Into strength by failure and stripes.  
Last, not least, of the heroes old,  
Smoke begrimed, fervid, crafty, bold—  
Sheridan, Grant, your comrade boon,  
Comes—to your haven comes.

The Commandery thereupon sang the Song of the Legion, to the music of Lauriger Horatius.

The Commander:—It perhaps illustrates the evolution of morality that when I was a boy there was a German drinking song about wine and pretty girls. Hence, if at any part of the meeting I should betray symptoms of ebriety, you will consider my bringing up and the power of Apollinaris.

I have called your attention to the fact that though the keystone of the arch is gone, there remain with us, on my right and left, the commanders of the right and left wing, and that the builder of General Sherman's railroad, from Chattanooga to Atlanta, has survived to carry out General Sherman's pet project, to which he gave so many years,—a railroad which should unite the Atlantic and Pacific. We have beside those gentlemen, another distinguished hero of those days. I rejoice to think that there is growing up with the age of this country a corresponding growth of hereditary loyalty. The Porters were valiant soldiers in the Revolution, and once more to avoid the travesty of introduction, I bring before you, with joy and pleasure, a survivor of that hereditary loyalty, General Horace Porter.

REMARKS OF GENERAL HORACE PORTER.

*Mr. Commander and Companions:* This has been a banner night for the Loyal Legion. It is supposed that there are

periods of an evening when veteran soldiers occasionally have to be removed from the tables, but to-night the tables have been removed from them. Movements are always rapid when things are passing to the rear, and the strategic movement by which those tables were taken from the room was eminently successful until they reached a point near the door, when a corner of one of those tables collided with the manly bosom of Horatio King, and, for a brief moment, I feared that he was about to go into the hands of a receiver.

We have been honored here to-night by the members of that sex which originally in the Garden of Eden was created out of the crookedest part of man, and is now principally engaged in straightening man out. As we sat here gazing upon them in the gallery, we have religiously obeyed that injunction of Scripture which commands us to set our affections upon things above, and in our unmeasured vanity we have been considering ourselves only a little lower than the angels. I wish to say that I yield to no one in the pleasure with which I have listened to that manly tribute of a brother to a brother. It seems all like a dream that General Sherman is dead ; we seem still to hear his cheery, manly voice lingering in this hall where we heard it so often, and yet it is more than a year since we found ourselves standing within the profound shadow of a manly grief, oppressed by a sense of sadness which is akin to the sorrow of a personal bereavement, when we heard that our old Commander had passed away from the living here, to join that other living, commonly called the dead, when the echo of his guns had given place to the tolling of cathedral bells, when the Flag of his Country which had never once been lowered in his presence dropped to half-mast, as if conscious that his strong arm was no longer there to hold it to the peak. His loss has created a gap in this particular community, which neither time nor men can ever fill. No social circle was complete without him ; where he sat was the head of the table. We can heap no further honors upon him by any words of ours ; he had them all. He had been elevated by his country to the highest position in the army, tendered votes of thanks

by Congress, made a member of distinguished societies abroad, had medals struck in his honor. We can add nothing to his earthly glory ; we can only gather as we assemble here to-night to recount the hours of pleasant intercourse we have had with him, to show our esteem for the soldier and our love for the man, for our hearts always warm to him with the glow of an abiding affection. He seemed to possess every characteristic of the successful soldier. Bold in conception, vigorous in execution, and unshrinking under grave responsibilities, he demonstrated by every act that "Much danger makes great hearts most resolute." In battle, wherever blows fell thickest, his crest was in their midst. The magnetism of his presence transformed routed squadrons into charging columns, and snatched victory from defeat. Opposing ranks went down before the fierceness of his onsets never to rise again ; he paused not until he saw the folds of his banners wave above the strongholds he had wrested from the foe. I shall never forget the first time I saw him. Much discussion had been going on at General Grant's headquarters at City Point in regard to the contemplated march to the sea. One officer of our staff thought that if that army cut loose from its base, it would be led only to destruction. I had a firm conviction that if ever Sherman cut loose and started through that country, he would wipe up the floor from one end of the Confederacy to the other, and pulverize everything he met into dust. General Grant said to me after he had had a good deal of correspondence by letter and telegraph with Sherman : "Suppose you go out and meet the General, you can repeat to him my views in detail, and get his ideas thoroughly, and I have no doubt a plan can be arranged which will provide for his cutting loose and marching to the sea." I went to Atlanta, very curious to see this great soldier of the West. I arrived there one morning soon after he had captured Atlanta ; I found him sitting on the porch of a comfortable house on Peachtree Street, in his shirt sleeves, without a hat, tilted back in a big chair reading a newspaper. He had white stockings and low slippers on his feet. He greeted me very cordially, wanted to hear all the news from the East, and



then he began a marvellous talk about his march to the sea. His mind, of course, was full of it. He seemed the very personification of nervous energy. During that talk the newspaper was torn into a thousand pieces; he tilted backward and forward in his chair until everything rattled; he would shoot off one slipper, then stick out his foot and catch it again, balance it on his toe, draw it back and put it on. He struck me as a man of such quick perceptions, as one who knew so well in advance precisely what he was going to do, as a person who seemed to have left nothing unthought of, or uncared for, regarding the contemplated march to the sea, that I felt confident that with him at the head of the movement it could not help being an absolute, a triumphant success. I went back; General Grant was much interested in my account of the interview, telling in detail General Sherman's views, and the arrangements he was making for the movement. Soon after that Sherman cut the wires and railroads in his rear, and struck out from Atlanta to the sea. I next saw him when he came, after his marvellous march had been completed, to meet General Grant at City Point. We were sitting in camp one day, when some one said to General Grant: "The boat has arrived, Sherman is on deck." The General dropped everything, ran hurriedly down the long flight of rude steps leading to the landing on the river, and, as he reached about the last step, General Sherman came off the boat rushing to meet him, and there they grasped each other's hands. It was "How are you, Sherman?" "How do you do, Grant? God bless you!" There they stood and chatted like two schoolboys on a vacation. Then came that memorable conference of intellectual giants. Just think of the group that sat together in the cabin of the President's steamer that afternoon—Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Admiral Porter, the four men who seemed to hold the destinies of the country in their grasp. There Sherman related, as only he could relate, that marvellous march to the sea. It was in itself a grand epic, and recited with Homeric power. People will never cease to appreciate the practical workings of the mind of the great strategist, who, in

his wonderful advance, overcame not only his enemy, but conquered Nature itself. But above and beyond all this, people will see much in his career which savors of the imagination, which excites the fancy, which has in it something more of romance than of reality ; they will be fond of picturing him as a great legendary knight, moving at the head of conquering columns, whose marches are measured not by single miles, but by thousands ; as a general who could make a Christmas gift to his President of a great sea-board city ; as a commander whose field of operations extended over half a continent, who had penetrated everglade and bayou, whose orders always spoke with the true bluntness of the soldier, whose strength converted weaklings into giants, who fought from valley's depth to mountain height, and marched from inland river to the sea. His friends will never cease to sing pæans to his honor, and even the wrath of his enemies may be counted in his praise. No man can rob him of his laurels, no one can lessen the measure of his fame. He filled to the very full the largest measure of military greatness, and covered the land with his renown. His distinguished brother has well said that he and General Grant were a Damon and a Pythias. Fortunate for us that those two illustrious commanders had souls too great for rivalry, hearts untouched by jealousy, and could stand as stood the men in the Roman phalanx of old, and lock their shields against a common foe. We are going to build a great monument to him now, but busy and vigorous as our hands may be, we can never expect to build it high enough to reach the lofty eminence of his fame.

The Commander :—It was always characteristic of veterans that they could turn the tables quickly, and even if they are a little lower than the angels, we have supreme sanction for the proposition that man was made a little lower than the angels to crown him with glory and honor, as we have been this evening by the distinguished persons present.

Now there is, in what General Porter has said, something of wider scope than appears without reflection. If you go to Rich-

mond, for example, there is a prodigious monument to Lee. On the public square of Richmond is a monument to Stonewall Jackson, inscribed as "A Monument to the Soldier, the Christian, and the Patriot. Gratefully Accepted by Virginia in Behalf of the Southern People." On the other hand, you may take the volume of the Commonwealth Series, entitled the *History of Virginia*, published in Boston, and in it you will find Lee and his fellow-rebels described as representative Virginians, and you may read it from beginning to end, and never know that there was such a man as George H. Thomas. These things are making futures, and the future they are making has its perils for our children.

I will now call upon General Howard.

REMARKS OF GENERAL O. O. HOWARD.

The institution of our world, touching the divine, in my judgment, is the family, and from an extended observation in different parts of the world, I have come to the conclusion to make no exceptions against the family in this our own land, the American family. I have been thinking over it to-night, that the family where the father and mother are loyal to the children, and the children are loyal to the parents, is certainly divine. While listening to the brother of General Sherman, I felt that I could thank God that he gave us the Sherman family. It is too late for any extended remarks. My mind goes back like that of General Porter. I wish I had his diction to express myself, and give you a picture of the first time that I met General Sherman, in the presence of Generals Grant and George H. Thomas. The scene is indelibly fixed upon my mind and heart. I will not attempt a description. I remember, just a little later, as you, sir, remember, Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge. I was delegated to meet General Sherman, to go on the enemy's side of the river, while he was throwing a bridge across, opposite the end of Missionary Ridge, and I did go, accompanying Steinwehr, having one of his brigades, an escorting brigade. We moved along, skirmishing with the skirmishers of the enemy (they,

though friends now, were enemies then), until we came near where the bridge was to be. The men that had gone to the other side were building their part of the bridge, as our part was being extended from the side on which we were, and the two parts were rapidly approaching. As soon as possible I got on that bridge and walked out as far as I could, while Sherman came from the other side, extending his hands, and saying, "How are you, Howard?" I answered, "I am well, I am glad to see you there." In a few minutes he sprang across like a boy to my side, caught me by the hand, and from that time we were friends to the close of the war; yes, from that time until the close of his life it was a delight to me to meet General Sherman. It is no use to speak of operations, or even of other things historic. One scene, where General Slocum was involved, might be mentioned in one minute. At Atlanta, after that wonderful dispatch, "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won," Hood, the indomitable Hood,—I knew him at West Point, undertook to tow us back, after we had seen more than a hundred days of daily fighting, with three days' exception, to get to Atlanta. A very hard road that had been to travel, and yet Hood was coming back again and going around our flank. I went in to see if General Sherman was not just a little disturbed; and I sat down with him. He said: "Howard, if he goes across a certain point I am going to turn the whole force on him, and leave Slocum here to defend Atlanta." Slocum was left there, and defended Atlanta, and the rest of us went back as you all know. We chased Hood off, drove him away so far that the only thing he could possibly do was to cross the Tennessee River to get out of our way. Then afterwards the indomitable Thomas met Hood and his army, and annihilated him. That was after we had started to the sea.

On the 1st of January, '65, and this indicates General Sherman's method with his officers, they were having a good time on that first day of the year, in one house and another, and Sherman sent for me. I supposed he would be with Blair or some other officers on that day, but he was thinking about the future. He said: "Howard, I want you to take your army



and go over to Beaufort, South Carolina, cross Beaufort Island, and be at Pocotaligo on the fifteenth of this month. Rather a short time. Slocum is going up the river and across the Sister's ferry, and he is going to Robertsville, and he will be there about the same time." It took us a little longer to get together, but the work was done. I was very glad to hear to-night that his brother so very thoroughly appreciated the hard work of that last campaign; the glory has been "The March to the Sea," but the real solid work, and that which contributed more than perhaps anything else to the grand result of the war, was the march through Columbia, across through Averysboro, and our battle at Bentonville. General Carlin here to-night remembers his part in that. On and on we toiled, until we came to the very points that Sherman had previously predicted as the end of his hopes; these were Goldsboro, and then Raleigh, North Carolina. You know they said there was nothing like discipline in Sherman's army, because the men would do just whatever Sherman said, and all the depredations, and all the misconduct of the bummers before that was laid to General Sherman's charge. To prove it, they said, after passing beyond Raleigh on to Washington, not a chicken was killed nor a sheep taken. That is true, but the only reason is that the Confederates had got home, and they co-operated with us in trapping our bummers.

In connection with the grand review at Washington, to which you have referred, is one of the sweetest recollections of my life. I had been relieved from duty with the Army of the Tennessee, or was about to be relieved, having been by the request of Mr. Lincoln allotted to another work, and I wanted to march at the head of the Army of the Tennessee, which I commanded. General Sherman took me into the War Department, sat down with me, and said: "Howard, I want you to surrender that, to give that up to General Logan; it will be everything to him." I demurred, but he very easily put another reason, and I consented.

Next day I came to General Sherman, and I said: "General, let me ride with your staff." "No," he said, "you shall



not ride with my staff, you shall ride with me." And so I had the honor and the great pleasure at the end of that long campaign of riding side by side with General Sherman himself, past the President of the United States.

There is just one more incident that I will speak of, one I think I have never spoken of in public. I was sitting in my office on the hill, near Seventh Street, in Washington, and a friend of mine came in. He said: "You seem to be happy." I said: "I don't see why I should not be happy."—"Have you seen the New York papers?"—"No."—"I have a good mind not to show them to you." Finally he pulled out of his pocket the New York *Tribune* and handed it to me. There, recorded against me, was a column and a half of the hardest charges that I had ever faced, and the blood stopped at my heart. A few moments afterward a poor colored woman came in with some petition for her distressed circumstances, and I was able after a little to listen to what she said. That somehow relieved me, and I went to the house and showed my wife the charges preferred by the Secretary of War which had been published in all the papers of the country before anything had been furnished to me. I wrote three letters, one to the Secretary of War, one to General Sherman, and one to General Grant. It had been said that I did not want to be tried. I demanded to be tried by any court of my countrymen inside or outside of the army. My letter to General Sherman was this: "Is not a good record of some account? Help me to defend it." When the court was made up finally, of seven general officers, General Grant sent for me. I went into the White House, and when I came in he said: "Here is the Court [it was a Court of Inquiry], before which the investigation of your matters will be had. Are there any officers to whom you object?" I looked over the list. I said: "I have the right of challenge." It was emphasized. General Grant said: "I would rather, if you are willing, that you should tell me now." Then I told him, and he looked up suddenly to me and said: "Howard, Sherman is President of the Court." I said: "That ought not to be; he is too much my friend." He said: "Never mind that"; and Sherman was

the President of the Court. The first finding was: "We find this officer is not guilty of any of the offences charged," and I owe it as much to his friendship as to anything else that I had so fair and so thorough an investigation. God bless the memory of General Sherman! General Slocum and myself were together a short time since in Brooklyn, and while we were talking together some one spoke about death and about the death of General Sherman. I said, suddenly and feelingly, and I say it again: "General Sherman will never die." General Slocum said to me with some severity: "What do you mean; my body will die." I said: "Yes, but your body is not you"? and so to-night, thinking of General Sherman, I think of him not as dead, but as living.

The Commander:—We are not going to close before we hear from General Slocum.

#### REMARKS OF GENERAL H. W. SLOCUM.

I feel impressed with the idea that at this late hour it would be discreet on my part to simply thank you for the compliment of calling upon me, and take my seat. I know the custom of the Commandery, and I am not going to make any extended remarks. I will, however, tell you a single incident of General Sherman's career that you have perhaps never heard, and you will pardon me for detaining you. General Porter said very truly that Sherman's campaign from Atlanta to the sea was thoroughly prepared beforehand. There was not an intelligent officer in all of Sherman's command who did not know just what his wagons were to carry, just where the materials and tools for destroying railroads were to go in the column, just where in the column were to be found the bridges for use in crossing streams, just the amount and kind of rations to be used each day. Every one knew beforehand, even before we left Atlanta, the exact duty of the men subsequently known as Sherman's bummers. They were the men who were to do the foraging for the army. They were detailed every morning to start out into the country to do certain work. This work was

to gather provisions, to secure maps, books, newspapers, letters, and bring them all into camp together, with all the live stock they could gather. When night came the letters and papers that they had taken from post-offices and from mail carriers were carefully read by men detailed for that purpose, to see what information could be gleaned from them. The maps taken from the different county court-houses or other places were passed over to the engineer officers to be used in making maps for the next day's march. Every night, a large number of letters and papers were sent to my headquarters. They were examined by a body of young officers. We often got letters conveying information from Lee's army, about the demoralization that was setting in. One night the officers at my headquarters upon whom this duty devolved sent me a newspaper, published in one of the Confederate States, which contained the startling information that a body of the ablest military men in Europe had been discussing the probability of Sherman's success, and that these most highly respected military men, assembled in London, were unanimously of the opinion that General Sherman was attempting a very foolhardy thing, which was certain to result in the destruction of his army. These military gentlemen in Europe said that it was utterly impossible for an army to go ten days from its base of supplies, and that this man Sherman was committing a most egregious blunder. I took the newspaper in my pocket and carried it to General Sherman that evening. I told him there was something in it which might interest him. I recollect he was sitting by a bright camp fire. He took the paper, read it carefully, and laughed heartily over it. His situation at that time reminded me of the anecdote told of a fellow who was arrested in New York City, taken before a police magistrate, and consigned to the Tombs to be held for trial. He sent for a Tombs lawyer, stated his case to him, and the lawyer said, "Why, my friend, they can't put you in jail for an offence of that kind in the State of New York." The fellow said, "But Squire, according to my notion of it, I am already in jail." Sherman was then twenty days away from his base of supplies,

“smashing things,” as he termed it, on his way to the sea, and here he had the pleasure of reading the unanimous verdict of the ablest officers in Europe to the effect that his great campaign was to prove an entire failure. It was one of those exquisite treats that few generals have enjoyed. He was then at the very height of his glory, sure of success, and had the satisfaction of reading the predictions of the ablest military authorities abroad that it was all going to prove a total failure. This was not the only treat of this nature enjoyed by him. Another has been alluded to this evening, which Sherman must have enjoyed quite as much. It was said he was insane because he told half the truth when he said we must have one hundred thousand men to conquer the enemy in the West. He was to meet the men who pronounced him insane for that assertion, and to point to the fact that more than double the number had to be called out. It must have afforded him great pleasure.

General Sherman's victories over his detractors at the North were not more marked or more striking than those over his armed foes at the South.

## IN AND OUT OF CONFEDERATE PRISONS.

A Paper Read by Captain GEO. H. STARR, 104th N. Y. Vol., May 3, 1892.

I SHALL be gratified, if this paper serves not merely to beguile a passing hour, but, by referring to scenes familiar to some of you, to awaken recollections of dear friendships and associations, now sacred to memory.

I was born at Rochester, N. Y., in 1840. My mother was from Berkshire County, Mass., my father from Litchfield County, Conn., and my first ancestor in this country, on his side, was Comfort Starr, a physician, who in 1634 came from Ashford, a village near Canterbury, in County Kent, England, and joined the Massachusetts Colony. He practised his profession in Cambridge, and his will, in quaint old style, was among the earliest admitted to probate at Cambridge.

At Ashford he had been a vestryman of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, but being a non-conformist, like many others who loved liberty in creed as well as in political affairs, he was unwilling to submit to the intolerant prescriptions of Archbishop Laud in the Church, and Thomas Wentworth (Lord of Strafford) in the State. He therefore took ship for the land of the free.

The old stone church of St. Mary's, with its tower and four turrets, partly overgrown with ivy, is still standing at Ashford in a good state of preservation.

In the spring of 1861, when Sumter was fired upon, I was of the senior class at Hamilton College, N. Y., and graduated there in July, 1861.

At Rochester I began to read law, but the liberty-loving blood of old Doctor Comfort flowed strong within me, and



finding it impossible to study to any good purpose, in view of the exciting news daily coming from the front, I laid down Blackstone, took up a musket, and enlisted November, 1861, for three years, as a private, in Company D of the 104th New York Volunteers, in consideration of \$13 per month and clothes and board and lodging, with a promise of \$100 bounty at the expiration of term of service.

During December, 1861 and January, 1862, as sergeant on recruiting service among the snow-covered hills of Steuben, Livingston, and Monroe counties, N. Y., I secured upwards of forty recruits, filling up the company, then stationed at Genesee, Livingston County, N. Y., and before reaching Meridian Hill, at Washington, in February, 1862, I was promoted to a second lieutenancy. I served continuously with the regiment, without a break, from the time of enlistment until the day I was captured. At Kalorama Heights, Washington, the regiment was assigned to the brigade of General Abram Duryea (formerly colonel of the 7th New York Militia), and the brigade moved into Virginia early in March, 1862, where it was attached to Ricketts's division of McDowell's corps. It was kept on detached duty most of the time until August, 1862, and roved around the country to the east of the mountains, ostensibly to guard Washington.

For ten days in May, 1862, the regiment was temporarily detached from the brigade, and did service with Geary's brigade, guarding Thoroughfare Gap at the time Banks retreated to Harper's Ferry. At the Gap it was so unfortunate as to lose its tents and officers' baggage, they being destroyed by General Geary, under orders from Washington, to prevent capture by the enemy. So we were without a wagon train when orders came to retreat from the Gap. Duryea's brigade was among the first to capture Warrenton, Va., and we celebrated the 4th of July there, but, unlike Vicksburg, the rebels were not present to defend the place.

On the evening of the 9th of August, 1862, the brigade participated in the closing scenes of the battle of Cedar Mountain, when Banks's force fell back to the rear of McDowell's corps ;

and it was then a wonder to us, and has been since to students of that affair, why that corps, as well as Sigel's, both of which lay hard by, were not ordered in at an earlier hour to Banks's assistance. If that had been done, probably Jackson would have had one less victory to his credit.

The regiment did picket duty along the Robinson River at the extreme point of Pope's advance, and during the subsequent retreat in August we lay for three days on the left bank of the Rappahannock, guarding the railroad bridge and the fords, to prevent the rebels from crossing; the brigade being for all three days under constant fire from the rebel batteries on the right, or west, bank.

With Ricketts's division we bravely marched up to Thoroughfare Gap, to try to stop Longstreet from coming through toward the east to join Jackson, who was then near Manassas, but after a sharp brush with his advance, we just as bravely marched back by night to Gainesville, Longstreet following. The historian is invidious, for the story of the night retreat of Ricketts's division, and how it lay closely penned between Longstreet's advance and Jackson's rear, and how it secretly decamped before daylight, dragging its guns, partly by hand, through streams and woods, is lost in oblivion; whereas Longstreet's march has become famous, mainly because of a controversy between Generals Pope and Porter, regarding what it is claimed was a good opportunity lost, to strike an effective blow upon Longstreet's right flank.

The regiment was at the second Bull Run fight, from start to finish. I was out for three or four hours in command of Company B, which served on the skirmish line, and by reason of a loss of killed and wounded that was proportionately heavy, considering the small number engaged, Lieutenant Rudd with Company G, was sent out to reinforce my command. He was killed only a few moments after coming out, but the skirmish line thus reinforced was enabled to and did hold its place until it was driven back to the line of the regiment by the general advance of Jackson, which occurred later in the day, when all hands beat a retreat on Centreville, six miles away.

Ricketts's division lay in close reserve to Reno's and Kearny's divisions during the night battle at Chantilly, which occurred at the closing hours of the 2d of September, in the midst of a storm so terrific that the roar of heaven's artillery above almost drowned the voices of the guns below, although the fighting while it lasted was of the fiercest. It was there, at Chantilly, that the lamented Kearny and Stephens rode to their last battle.

Early in September, 1862, McClellan having resumed command of his old army lately from the Peninsula, reinforced by the army formerly under General Pope, we crossed the Potomac into Maryland, and hastened northwestwardly to meet the rebels and drive them out of the State. At South Mountain on a beautiful Sabbath afternoon (General Hooker being in command of the First Corps, which held the right wing, and which then consisted of Reynolds's, Ricketts's, and King's divisions), we swept up the slope of South Mountain, in a long extended line of battle; and in spite of a severe fire of musketry, we drove the rebel force from its summit, and the First Corps made its bivouac there that night with the rebel dead and wounded lying thick about it.

During the early hours of the bloody 17th of September, 1862, on the field of Antietam, the First Corps under Hooker drove back the rebel left wing for about a third of a mile, and General Reynolds then taking command (as General Hooker had been disabled by a shot in the foot), the corps held its ground till about mid-day, when it was relieved by Sumner's corps.

On the day following, being a day of truce, the rebels removed their wounded, but left our army to bury their dead. When we did so two days later, the sight of the long ranks of the rebel dead, their bodies black and swollen to repulsiveness by the heat, was the most sickening and appalling sight I ever witnessed. My commission as captain dates from the battle of Antietam. At Warrenton, Va., some weeks later, the whole army was drawn out in line to bid farewell to its old commander, General McClellan, and greet his successor, General Burnside.

On December 13, 1862, at Fredericksburg, the First Corps under General Reynolds held the left, and our brigade followed Meade's division in a charge over the railroad, and up a wooded ridge held by General Jackson's troops, through a storm of bullets, shot, and shell, only to be driven out with severe loss.

Upon Burnside's "mud march" in February, 1863, the boys of our brigade and division buckled to pontoon wagons, after all the mules available had given out or become mired; and upon that march we saw hundreds of carcasses of mules that had been shot in their tracks, having become so deeply mired that they could not be extricated. We witnessed and assisted in many efforts to pry them out of the mud, by the use of fence rails and small pine saplings, but often to no purpose.

The First Corps crossed the Rappahannock, and reached the battle-field at Chancellorsville, in May, 1863, after an all-day forced march up the left bank of the river from near Falmouth, and it helped to stay the partial rout that had ensued, when Jackson's force fell upon the Eleventh Corps, and later in the evening the corps formed a line of battle, at or near the ground held by the Eleventh Corps but a few hours before, the regiment going out half a mile beyond to do picket duty. It was a memorable night, owing to the excitement of its earlier hours, but we had no encounter except with a small squad of cavalry, that riding inadvertently upon our picket line was driven off with some loss.

The First Corps lay at Emmettsburg, Maryland, on the 1st of July, 1863, only eight or nine miles distant from Gettysburg, and it was while there, and shortly after reveille, that we first heard the faint sounds of the light artillery attached to Buford's dauntless little cavalry force, that betokened the beginning of that fierce battle, now so memorable.

After a march of ten miles, at first at quick, and later at double-quick time, through the sweltering heat of that fearfully hot morning, the First Corps under General Reynolds came up to the support of Buford. It crossed the fields before reaching

Gettysburg, taking a northwesterly course to a point near the rear of the brick seminary, and from that point, with scarcely time to load, its three divisions were swung round into line of battle upon the crest of Seminary Ridge, facing northwesterly; Buford's cavalry falling back, and re-forming on our flanks and rear. General Hill with a force more than double our own was pushing eastwardly toward Gettysburg, by both the Chambersburg and Mummasburg pikes, which converged at the town, and our force being thrown across both, and having Seminary Ridge for a vantage ground, it effectually blocked his way, and for hours we successfully resisted his repeated attempts to dislodge us and turn our right flank. It was just at the outset of the battle, that our dearly esteemed General Reynolds met his death; he being killed in a thicket a little to the left of the brigade front, and from that point, in view of perhaps one third of his corps, his body was borne back through the lines. General Reynolds held a very exalted place in the esteem of the whole army, and, in the opinion of the writer, was as well qualified for the chief command as any general officer who was ever connected with the Army of the Potomac.

Within an hour afterwards, General Paul (who commanded our brigade) was disabled, by a severe but not fatal wound.

The loss in killed and wounded among us was very great in proportion to our numbers. First Lieutenant Thomas Johnson was shot dead at my side, and Second Sergeant Leffleth had his leg torn off by a round shot. A staff officer from General Doubleday, who rode up near to the line of battle, and shouted to us to hold the position, had his horse shot from under him and was thrown to the ground at the very moment of giving the order. Except for a low stone wall in our front it would have been impossible to have stood, as we did, against the fierce attempts of General Hill's corps to dislodge and out-flank us. This condition continued for several hours, until General Ewell's corps, coming from the north and northeast, and overpowering two divisions of the Eleventh Corps on his way, swept around our right wing, and gaining a position in the village in rear of us, was thus enabled to capture almost



bodily such portion of our brigade, including our regiment, as then remained in line.

The monuments of the 104th N. Y. Regiment, with that of the 13th Massachusetts of our brigade, are the first to be seen on Oak Ridge, as one now approaches from Gettysburg, when coming by rail from the north. The rebels on the first day of the battle took as prisoners about three thousand men and two hundred and fifty officers, the larger part being from the First and the remainder from the Eleventh Corps. The *National Tribune* (commenting on a recent article by Mr. Roosevelt in the *Century Magazine*, wherein he compares and contrasts the battles of Gettysburg and Waterloo) says: "There was no fighting at Waterloo equal to the heroic defence of Oak Ridge on the first day by the First Corps, which lost the greatest number of killed and wounded ever lost by so small a body of men on the field of battle; and it inflicted even a more terrible loss upon its assailants."

The picture may be slightly over-drawn, but it was a very hot day and a very hot place. Excluding those of my regiment who were wounded and left on the field, or who, being borne back to the village that day, were retaken by our own forces on the third day, there were of my regiment about ten officers and one hundred men captured, on that first day of the battle, and they, with such other prisoners as were then and afterwards captured, were kept under guard immediately in rear of the rebel line of battle, until the 4th of July, when they were marched toward the south, with Lee's retreating army; the number taken south aggregating nearly four thousand.

On the morning of the second day of the battle, General Lee with some of his staff officers rode into the field near Wiloughby Run, where the captured officers were kept under guard, and proposed to us, that all the officers, with the men who were held under guard in a separate field near by, should then and there accept a parole, in which case he said that he would at once pass us through to the Union lines, and we could return to our homes.

This offer after a brief conference was declined, by reason

of a late stringent order of the War Department forbidding prisoners to accept of paroles on the field, and directing that they should submit to be held as prisoners until exchanged in due course.

Without reflecting upon the justice of such an order, or the wisdom or good policy of our refusal to accept the proffered parole (ignorant as we were, of the fate that awaited us), yet that moment is never recalled without a thought as to what a vast amount of suffering, disease, and death might have been averted from those four thousand prisoners, and how many perhaps of those who became the victims of long imprisonment might be still living and enjoying the delights of happy homes, had we only accepted that offer of parole. For had we done so the War Department might, and most likely would, have overlooked the technical violation of the order, in view of the peculiar emergency of our case.

Having refused the parole, the only prospect before us was a long march to Richmond, and imprisonment there, for how long a period we could not foretell.

Being just in rear of the rebel lines, we were well apprised of the fighting on the second and third days, as the rebel guns during the terrific cannonading were close at hand, and the round shot and shell from our own batteries on Cemetery Ridge, and Round Top, came plunging about where we lay, quite careless of our proximity.

The 4th of July began with a heavy rain-storm that lasted four or five days, during which we were continuously soaking wet. We celebrated the "Fourth" by a march toward the Potomac, under guard of the remnant of the divisions of Pickett and Heth that made the famous charge on the 3d, and about the 10th of July we were ferried over the Potomac on a raft, in squads of about thirty. Between Hagerstown and the river, we passed several of the bodies of our cavalymen, who had been killed while encountering Lee's advance, and at the time we crossed, the rebel army lay in a semicircle upon the left bank, or Maryland side, of the river; its wagons, ammunition and ambulance trains being parked on the flats

near the river, the water being then too high to permit of recrossing.

The fierce General Imboden, with a feather in his hat, fire in his eye, and profanity in his mouth, with an irregular mounted force, dressed like brigands, formed a vigilant guard on the long march, up the valley of the Shenandoah, to Stanton.

Near Strasburg we passed a long pontoon train, hastening to the aid of Lee's army in recrossing into Virginia. Pressed by hunger, and not foreseeing a long imprisonment, we dickered with the poor whites and darkies along the way, trading valuable articles of raiment for dirty ash cakes, cornbread, blackberry pies sour for lack of sugar, or for other edibles. These were veritable dainties, for the regular rations upon that march were raw flour or meal, raw skinny beef or poor bacon, and we had no facilities for cooking except such few utensils as we happened to have when captured, or had bartered for on the way.

On reaching Richmond, the enlisted men were sent to Belle Isle, an island in the James River, and the officers to Libby.

We passed the portals of Libby, or the American Bastile, on the 23d of July; its begrimed denizens greeting us with their usual cries of "Fresh Fish," "Where were you captured," "How were you captured," "Ring the bell for dinner," "Let me check your baggage," "Louder, old pudding-head," "Give that calf more rope," etc. The shady side of life in Southern prisons has been so often depicted with harrowing pathos that I will dwell for the most part upon some of the features that tended in some degree to relieve its miseries.

During the first week in July, upwards of ten thousand rebels were taken prisoners at Gettysburg, and upwards of twenty-six thousand at Vicksburg, and until that time exchanges of prisoners under the cartel had continued, although at irregular intervals. At about the time, however, of the arrival of our party in Richmond exchanges were totally suspended, by reason of a controversy between the belligerents. They were not resumed during the war, except some special exchanges of small parties on a few occasions, and a special

exchange of several thousand sick and wounded, made, as it was claimed, for humanity's sake, in the winter of 1864 and 1865.

Although the ratio of death to the whole number of Union soldiers incarcerated, increased at a rapidly accelerating pace, from the month of July, 1863, when the cartel was suspended, until the close of the war, still the gain by further captures so far exceeded the loss by death, that at the close of the war the rebels held, as nearly as I can ascertain, upwards of fifty thousand prisoners, including about two thousand commissioned officers.

Among the other prison pens, wherein on and after July, 1863, large bodies of our private soldiers were kept for long periods, were Belle Isle, in the James River at Richmond, several warehouses in the city of Richmond, Andersonville and Millen in Georgia, Florence in South Carolina, and Salisbury in North Carolina. Beginning with July, 1863, the officers were kept together and in one body for the most part, but were moved about from one point or prison to another. From July, 1863, until May, 1864, they were held at Libby prison in Richmond; in May, 1864, they were removed in a body to a stockade in Macon, Georgia; in July, 1864, by reason of General Stoneman's raid from Sherman's army (which was designed for the release of the officers from Macon and the men from Andersonville), the officers were removed from Macon, Ga., to Savannah, Ga., and in a few days were taken thence to Charleston, S. C. At Charleston they were kept in the four buildings known as the Roper and Marine Hospitals, the Penitentiary, and the Nigger jail, until the first week in October, 1864, when, by reason of yellow fever breaking out in Charleston and in the prisons there, they were removed to Columbia, S. C., and there were placed in a stockade located near the right bank of the Saluda River, at a point a little northwest of the city. This prison we dubbed "Old Camp Sorghum," and this was the end of the pilgrimage, or the excursions, so to speak, made by the body of Union officers from prison to prison throughout Dixie. Of the officers, to the number of

seventeen hundred or eighteen hundred who reached Camp Sorghum in October, 1864, all remained there until they were sent North by way of Wilmington, N. C., at the close of the war, except such as were earlier released by death, or the few who effected their escape.

It is not the purpose of this paper to enter upon the merits of the controversy concerning exchange, or to comment upon the justice of that policy of our own government that permitted so large a number of its volunteer soldiers to languish and die in Southern prisons, but it may not be amiss to ask why some of the writers upon the history of the Rebellion, have not set forth all the facts attending the suspension of exchange of prisoners, or disclosed more clearly the real reasons why exchanges were not resumed and why the prison doors were not opened at an earlier day.

The call of humanity was just as loud on behalf of the able-bodied, soon to yield to disease, as it was on behalf of those who had already succumbed.

Among others, more or less noted, whom we found in Libby prison, were Col. A. D. Straight of Indiana, Colonel Louis di Cesnola and Captain Charlier of New York, Albert D. Richardson, correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, and Chaplain McCabe, and they with about two hundred and fifty others, occupied four rooms in the second and third stories; our party bringing up the number to over six hundred. We little suspected that the most of us had come to remain in that prison-house until May, 1864. The saying, that "hope springs eternal in the human breast," as applied to its inmates during that period, should be coupled with that other saying, that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." During all that time the subject of exchange was the chief topic. "Rumor with a thousand tongues" was constantly rife, and new rumors came in with each new batch of prisoners.

Hope would rise to high tide on one day, while on the next it would sink to depths of despair. The subject of exchange became to many a veritable craze, and to such, "Trifles light as air were confirmation strong as proofs of Holy Writ."



Money taken from us, or sent to us from the North, was placed to our credit on the prison books (so it was said), but the bulk of it was never restored; a few small installments in Confederate currency being all that was allowed us.

Some of us were beguiled into writing North for remittances to be sent to Major Turner, and I thus became and remain a creditor of the Confederacy, to the extent of about sixty dollars in gold, and accrued interest. Blank brick walls divided the three-story building into three sections, passage ways being cut through the walls on the second and third floors, after it was put to use as a prison. Fronting on Carey Street, the slope of the ground gave it four stories in the rear, and doorways opened from each of the three cellars on to the street in the rear. Each of the lodging rooms was about forty-five feet wide by one hundred and ten feet deep; and shortly after our arrival the two additional upper rooms were brought into use, making six such rooms in all. In October following, the middle room of like size on the Carey Street level, which was connected with the lodging rooms above by a stairway, was thrown open for a cook-room, and half a dozen stoves were placed in it for the use of the prisoners, three at each of the two chimney-places.

On the 1st of October, 1863, about four hundred officers arrived who were captured at Chickamauga, and from that time until the 1st of May 1864, the number of inmates averaged from one thousand to over eleven hundred, the sixty who made good their escape through the tunnel in February, 1864, being more than replaced by new comers. Surgeons and chaplains to the number of perhaps forty, captured at Gettysburg and Chickamauga, were not released until November, 1863. By one of them, the Rev. John Hussey of Ohio, I smuggled out a letter, by means of which greenbacks reached me later concealed in a box of provisions. Citizens and petty tradesmen who got into the prison were eager to barter rebel money for greenbacks. A one dollar greenback commanded \$5 in rebel currency in July, 1863, but the rate of exchange rapidly increased, until at the 1st of October, 1864, a one

dollar greenback would fetch \$12, and a dollar in gold would fetch \$20 to \$22 in rebel currency.

On our arrival, Captains Sawyer of New Jersey and Flynn of Indiana were confined in cells in the middle cellar as hostages, under threat of hanging, in retaliation for rebel officers executed in Tennessee. They were released from the cells by the rebels, when they learned that Uncle Sam had placed young Captain Lee and Captain Winder in a similar kind of durance, to be accorded just such treatment as should be visited upon Sawyer and Flynn. But fear still so preyed upon Sawyer's mind that, at the nightly quiz classes (exercises which usually began after taps, when lights were out), it became quite a common joke to hear the call, "Who wants to be hung?" with the invariable answer, from several quarters perhaps, "Captain Sawyer."

These hilarious proceedings occurred after we had retired to the floor for the night, and if any of the comrades displayed irritation (because disturbed in vain attempts to get to sleep), it only served to make matters worse, for there were others in plenty determined to keep up a racket and banish sleep, and they did it. Hardly any one escaped from some practical joke, or from being dubbed with some slang name or epithet that became a sort of prison appendage, and hung to him during his term of prison service, like a tail to a kite. "Who shaved the darky off the track?" (referring to an officer acting as barber). Answer: "Lieutenant L." "Who surrendered for the sake of humanity?" "Who was captured outside the lines, courting the widow?" "Who threw dried apples in the chimney place?" "Who plays the spy?" "Who keeps a black list to report at Washington?"

Q. Why is Libby like a literary institution? A. Because it is a lyceum. Some slow thinker responds: "I don't see um." Another shouts: "No, but you feel um, all the same." Jokes of this kind made the evenings more or less merry.

At night we usually lay in rows, in close order; two narrow pathways leading from front to rear of each room, between the rows of heads and feet. Woe to the man who made a

noise at the bath-tub during the night hours! Sticks, old ham bones, boot-jacks, chunks of old corn-bread hard as bricks, would fly at his unprotected form. As numbers increased, nightly wanderings through the lodging rooms became scarcely possible, while in the cook-room there was but little space to spare, not absorbed by the long, stationary pine tables with their accompanying benches, and by the stoves and stove pipes. The stoves and benches stood for a time as monumental burlesques upon our empty larder and stomachs, until they became so aggravating that we broke them up for firewood.

Occasionally a funny fellow among the sentinels who did night duty about the prison, would sing out as he called the hour, in that drawling high-keyed, peculiarly Southern tone something intended to be facetious. For example: "One o'clock, and all 's well, old Beast Butler whipt like hell, and all 's well." "Two o'clock, Yankee gunboats up the river, all a sell, and all 's well."

While restlessly tossing upon the hard floor softened only by a single blanket, and dreaming of friends at home, tables laden with home goodies, to be thus roused to dreary realities, and then to lie awake perhaps for hours trying to peer through the gloom into the future, was not a cheering situation, even if a funny sentry did provoke an occasional laugh.

Minstrel performances were sometimes had in the kitchen, burned cork being used to blacken the faces, and the rebels furnishing apparel for the performers who took the ladies' parts. These were announced by highly illustrated programmes stuck about the walls. The Glee Club gave lively entertainments, particularly at news of victory for our arms, or rumors of speedy exchange. On such occasions, spirits rose high, and the grand old war-songs, such as "John Brown's Body," "We are coming, Father Abraham, etc., awoke a rousing chorus; the rebels usually tolerating it for the sake of the music.

No clothing was furnished us by the rebels from their own stores. Such as came from our Sanitary and Christian Commissions, for the most part, was delivered to our boys on Belle Isle, and as that which came in private boxes designed for the

officers was usually confiscated, the one suit worn by each of us on arriving at the prison, soon degenerated from gentility to extreme shabbiness, so that a light shirt and a thin pair of trousers became the conventional mode for all occasions, even for roll-call, when we were formed into line, in what was termed "dress parade."

During the first few months, when skinny and livid beef, rice, or beans were sometimes issued, groups of twenty or thereabouts were formed into messes, so called, each member taking his turn as cook. In those days a common cry was, "Fall in, mess number ten, for your wormy beans"; or, "Fall in, mess two, for your beef bones and rice," but the use of the same kettles, for boiling meat and for boiling clothes, together with the diminishing quantity of meat rations, soon made the big-mess system intolerable and useless.

Afterwards, small messes of two or three came into vogue, and then "riot" is the only word to properly describe the condition of affairs in the cook-room below. The boiling and baking utensils were mostly old oyster and tomato cans, or old pans or cans of other descriptions brought in by friendly darkies, and the efforts of several hundred cooks, each trying to fight his way to a stove to get his little pan or can over the fire, and to keep it there, caused a regular pandemonium; the noises from below at such times being like to voices coming up from an infernal pit.

The earliest daily exercise was to strip off the shirt, and make an excursion down the seams for the little animalculæ or microbes, and then to extinguish them between the finger nails.

These little fellows would stick closer than a brother. It was not altogether poetic license on the part of the rhymers who said

" Each little flea has smaller flea upon his back to bite him,  
This smaller flea, still lesser flea, and so *ad infinitum*."

While engaged in this sanguinary pastime, "Old Smoke" (a grizzled old darky with a skillet of charcoal) generally made his rounds. Shortly after, "Old Ben," another darky with a small supply of morning papers (lucky if he sold more

than one or two), would tramp about, crying: "Wake up, all you Yanks, grate news in de papers grate news from Virginty." "All about the way General Bragg flinked the Yanks at the grate battle ob Chickenmauger, far in the souf west." "Grate news from de place whar de war is, grate news from eberywhar."

One morning some jokers in our room got Ben to sing out at the head of the stairs above us, a joke specially aggravating to the comrades in that room (directed against the army corps to which most of them belonged), whereupon he was uncere- moniously hustled down the stairs, and came tumbling down in a great fright, his papers scattered about on the floor. Picking them up, he said: "Dorg gone dose Yanks up dar. Ise jist gwine to quit dat room up dar. Ise not gwine up dar no mo! no mo!"

"Fall in, sick, and go down," was the familiar drawling cry, every morning, of the rebel sergeant when he came in to gather up the sick and escort them to the hospital below. Those who died, were carted away to graves in what was then a Potter's field for Union soldiers, which was located beyond the colored suburb known as "Rocketts."

Now it is one of our national cemeteries, but most of the boys taken there for burial, from Belle Isle, from the hospitals on the first floor of Libby, or from other warehouses in Richmond used as prisons, have now no inscription over their graves except the word "Unknown."

Perhaps the most repulsive feature about Libby was the lack of privacy. There was a constant jostle of one man against another. Confinement in private cells for a few hours of each day would have been a boon! Hence Libby was of all places a rare place for character study. The ruling traits of a man could not be concealed, and if repulsive they stood out in naked deformity. On the other hand, it was wonderful how little such direful surroundings could depress one of a happy and hopeful temperament. Nothing seemed to daunt him, and his sanguine spirit seemed to rise superior to every emergency.

Illustrations were not wanting of the saying that "the ruling passion is strong in death."



Some of the comrades were naturally jolly, and they were bound to be jolly at all times and under all circumstances. They were as pertinacious about it as the incorrigible punster who, being informed when on his deathbed that his next-door neighbor, a widow, had fallen into a well, raised his head suddenly from his pillow with the inquiry, "Did she kick the bucket?"

The tunnel from which one hundred and nine officers escaped early in February, 1864, was under way for about two months, and was designed and carried out mainly under the directions of Col. Thos. E. Rose of the 77th Pennsylvania Volunteers, captured at Chickamauga (who has since been a Major in the regular service), and Major A. G. Hamilton of the 12th Kentucky Cavalry. They were aided by a working party, at first of about twelve, afterwards increased to about twenty. The fact that the work was in progress was known to perhaps less than two hundred out of the whole number of prisoners. It was kept as secret as possible, not so much from distrust of other comrades, but lest the jailers might get suspicious if the matter was bruited about too generally.

The tunnel proper extended from under the east wall of the east cellar about five feet below the surface of a vacant lot some sixty feet wide next east of the prison, and had its exit in a wagon shed which stood upon the north end of the second lot to the east. This shed had its open side looking south toward a small warehouse that stood on the rear of the lot, which latter had a double-door gangway leading through it to the street in the rear; there being a space of about fifty feet between the shed and the warehouse. By arrangement with a friendly dinky, the doors of the warehouse were left unfastened. The most laborious and delicate part of the scheme, in view of the risk of detection, was the cutting of a hole into the back of one of the chimney-places in the cook-room and thence diagonally down through the wall, so that it afforded access, not into the middle cellar below the kitchen, but into the most easterly of the three cellars, known in prison parlance as "Rat Hell."

This initial part of the work was done by night, by aid of a trowel and case-knives; the mortar being picked out little by little and then the bricks one by one. Access was had through that hole into the east cellar by means of a long rope; short sticks being knotted into it, to serve as a ladder. After reaching the east cellar, the working party sank a shaft to get below the foundations of the east wall, then cut away the spiles supporting the foundations, and then burrowed out the tunnel, which led through a gravelly and hard-pan soil, and was, when completed, about sixty-three feet long, and twenty-two inches by twenty-four in diameter. It was carried by an easy grade toward the surface, until it found its exit under the shed before described. During the first few weeks the work was carried on by night, but later, urgency required a few of the party to remain in the cellar, and work by day. The dirt scooped out was placed under piles of loose straw, which abounded in large quantities at the back or north end of the cellar.

The success of this whole plan, wonderful as it was for ingenuity of design as well as pluck and perseverance in execution, was attributable to the fact that the north end of the east cellar from which the tunnel led, was not used, and was but rarely visited by any of the rebel officers or guards. It was a dark, noisome place, partly filled with straw and abounding in rats, while the south end of the cellar, which had a stairway leading from the hospital above, and a doorway opening on the street in the rear of the prison, was used by the officials as a temporary morgue for dead Union soldiers brought from the hospital above. So there was little occasion for the jailers to go back into the dark northerly end of that cellar, from which the tunnel led.

Although only a few remained in the cellar to prosecute the work by day, it was necessary for their confederates in the room above to deceive the rebel officials, so that whenever a count was made it would show the same number present each morning.

This was done by a process of what we called "repeating,"

which was a plan whereby some of the comrades in the tunnel secret would get counted twice or more. But sometimes this plan did not work, and then there was fun.

"Fall in, yer Yanks, in four rows," had been the usual order for the roll-call, when conducted by little Ross, the prison clerk, and for a time repeating was done by dropping out from the right of the line after being counted and falling in again on the left to be again counted. But this being at some times impossible without detection, the result was that the total number counted might vary somewhat from day to day.

When this occurred, Ross would get fearfully exasperated, and his inability to make a correct count would seem at times likely to dethrone his reason. On one occasion, having counted and recounted the column perhaps a dozen times, with a change each time in the result, he broke out with the cry, "Now I am suah there is more than a dozen of you damn Yanks yer, who aint yer." At this sally, there was a roar of laughter from the prisoners that shook the rafters.

This trick being discovered, Major Turner devised the plan of driving the prisoners from the east room on the second floor to the middle room on the same floor, counting them as they passed through the doorway. But the boys were more than equal to the occasion, for some of them, ascending to the third floor and thence out through a scuttle hole on to the roof over the middle section, would come down again through another scuttle hole in the roof over the east section, and, passing again through the same doorway, would be again counted. If I mistake not, this device was never discovered, at least not prior to the time of the escape, and subsequently it was abandoned.

When you visit Libby at Chicago, and go onto the top floor you can see the veritable scuttle holes, over what are now, as the prison stands, the north and the middle rooms.

In Richmond the prison stood facing the north, but as it now stands facing the west, what was in our day the east end, is now the north end. So that at Chicago you will find the

entrance to the tunnel in the northerly side of the present north cellar.

The original plan was to have about one hundred and fifty go out the first night in squads of ten to fifteen and the tunnel was then to be closed at both ends, so that another party could take leave on future occasions if practicable. But a notion that the jailers were getting suspicious, led to the flight a night or two earlier than originally planned. This led to disorder in the whole arrangement, so that after a few of the working party had made their way out, others who knew of the scheme seized the opportunity, and it became practically a strife between seventy-five and one hundred of us, to see if we could force our way out and who could get out first. As one of this crowd that had gathered in the kitchen from the lodging rooms above, I was pushing and squeezing forward and was pushed and squeezed very slowly, towards the hole in the fireplace. It was long after "taps," but before midnight, when an alarm was shouted from the stairway to indicate that the guard was coming into the prison. This proved to be a false alarm, but it caused a fearful racket and a scattering of many from the cookroom, toward the stairway, and thence up the stairs; the rush in the darkness being accompanied by much stumbling and falling upon or over the stoves, stove-pipes, tables, or benches that crowded the room, or over the prostrate forms of other comrades, for some of the comrades, including myself, had dropped upon the floor, and there we lay for a time to await developments. The suspicion of the guards, wonderful to tell, seemed not to be excited by such a tremendous midnight episode, noisy as it was, so that within half an hour those of us remaining in the cookroom roused up one by one, and began again to crowd toward the hole in the chimney, and work down through it feet foremost into the cellar. I crawled through that suffocating underground hole at about 2 A.M., and being joined in the shed by the comrade who emerged next in order from the hole (Lieutenant Pierce), we passed through the yard, and thence over the gangway of the warehouses to the doorway opening

into the street in the rear. There we stood for a brief moment, watching and waiting until the sentinel who paced the beat at the rear of the prison should face about and retrace his steps. As he turned to the westward we crept along stealthily under the shadow of the warehouses in the opposite direction, until turning the first corner and going north, we were at length at large in the public streets.

We took an easterly course toward the Chickahominy, avoiding the highway to Bottoms Bridge, because of the risk of being intercepted by rebel pickets, and keeping the way for the most part, through woods or thickets, and sometimes through swamps.

Being exhausted the next morning, and much too weak to attempt then to cross the Chickahominy River, we put back shortly after daylight to a point perhaps a mile and a half to the west of the river, and there got into a dense thicket of scrub pines where we sought a place for rest and hiding, under a low and wide-spreading tree.

Shortly after noon we were aroused from sleep to look into the muzzle of an old-fashioned Colt's revolver held by a Confederate scout, who ordered us out and put us on the march before him. Unarmed, and enfeebled by long imprisonment we could not very well resist, and were thus led southward to the highway leading to Richmond. There we came up with a party of about thirty others who had been recaptured in much the same way, and being put in charge of a band of troopers at about nightfall we again beheld the grimy face of grim old Libby.

As we stood upon the pavement of Carey Street and gazed up at our late comrades peering out at us through the bars, it was indeed a gloomy, heart-sickening moment. At the first entrance to that dungeon, what might be in store for us was only conjecture, but at this, our second entrance, we knew that a slow process of starvation awaited us, for we knew that we must again struggle from day to day, to preserve health and life without food or drink sufficiently nourishing to aid us in the struggle, and it was a prospect gloomy enough to appall any one!



It seems as if the sense of humor would not desert some men, even when in the jaws of death, so to speak.

This was illustrated in our case in a very pointed way when some of the boys at the barred windows overhead, shouted out at us, "Fresh fish! Fresh fish! When were you captured?" "How were you captured?" "I told you so," etc. From the street we were conducted to the middle cellar, and there placed in cells, and others recaptured during the next three days were put with us, bringing up the number to about fifty. Each cell was about ten feet by twelve in size and was partitioned off with boards from the cellar proper, and had no light except such as was derived from the dark cellar, through a small hole in the door; they were veritable dungeons. Here to the number of about a dozen in a cell, we sat and slept upon the damp ground of the cellar bottom, rendered peculiarly damp and mouldy, because the cellar was subject at times to overflow from the canal, which ran about sixty feet distant from the rear of the prison. At the end of a week we were restored to former privileges; that is to say, to the parlor floor above. During the incarceration in the cells, rations were even more meagre than usual, as each of us had but one loaf per day of hard corn-bread, and this, with muddy water from the James River, constituted the entire supply of food and drink.

"On horror's head, horrors accumulate." In March, 1864, at the time of the Kilpatrick and Dahlgren raid on Richmond, when the latter was killed, Major Turner provided us with two sleepless, nerve-trying nights, by advising us that the prison had been mined with kegs of powder placed in the cellar, and that should any attempt be made to escape, when the Union cavalry force assaulted the town (as it was believed that it would do), the prisoners should go out by way of the roof.

Confederate records discovered since the war have disclosed that he told the truth as to the mining business.

Several officers captured on this raid, were placed in close confinement for two months, in cells built in the cook-room; some colored soldiers captured from our army being confined with them.

In April, 1864, through the intervention of friends, I was one of about twenty officers chosen to be sent north in exchange for a like number of rebel officers brought up to Fort Darling (near Richmond) by the flag-of-truce boat. We descended to the first floor and had all signed the parole, when little Ross, the prison clerk, came out of the office announcing that "Major Turner says that all you 'uns who was in yer tunnel business can't go nohow, and must get back out of yer to your quarters." Of the three unfortunates then returned to the lodging rooms above, I was one. To be thus deprived of liberty, when it was almost within grasp, was a renewed disappointment, too keen for description.

At about this time General John Morgan, the rebel cavalry leader who had escaped from confinement at Columbus, Ohio (where he was confined after capture upon his raid through Ohio), visited Libby, and we listened to his vivid account of his escape and adventures before he regained the rebel lines in Tennessee.

It was not an unusual thing for rebel officers of rank to stroll through the rooms of the prison under escort of some of the prison officials, but as a rule they had little to say.

The prison was not visited during my imprisonment, that I was aware of, either by Jeff. Davis or by any of his Cabinet, or by General Winder, the official who was chief in charge of the prisoners, nor by Mr. Ould, the Commissioner for Exchange of Prisoners. I saw President Davis, however, on several occasions driving past the prison in a one-horse Jersey wagon, accompanied by members of his family, on his way to the steamboat at "Rocketts," a landing place on the James River, a little below, or to the east of, Libby. I have his appearance in my mind's eye at this moment. He sat very erect upon the front seat, wore a high silk hat and high collar, and drove along in a leisurely way with an old plug of a horse, but never so much as cast an eye toward the prison, to see how his wards were getting along.

Before dawn on the second day of May, the rebel sergeant shouted through the prison, "Pack up, all ye Yanks, and fall in

to go south." We were shortly marched out to the railroad depot, and there packed into box freight cars, and shipped to Danville, Va. There we remained five days, quartered in some old cotton warehouses, and from thence were marched on foot about twenty-five miles to Greensboro, N. C. The day was very stormy and the pathway a very muddy one, being part of the way upon a newly built embankment for a railroad to connect Danville, Va., with Greensboro, N. C.

The fact that a gap of that length was permitted to remain till May, 1864, in a trunk railroad line between Richmond and the south, in fact the most direct route for bringing troops and supplies to Richmond, affords a good idea of the lack of business methods that prevailed in the rebel quartermasters' department.

Arriving at Macon, Georgia, we were put into an enclosure of about one and a half acres that had been set off from an old State fair grounds by a high board fence, or stockade. A stream of water crossed its lower end, and a low picket fence, about ten feet inside the stockade, served as a dead line, so called.

About seventy-five officers had preceded us to this place, who had been captured in April at Plymouth in eastern North Carolina.

At about this time, also, our boys to the number of about ten thousand were sent down from Belle Isle at Richmond, where they had spent the winter, to Andersonville, Georgia, located about seventy-five miles to the southwest of Macon. Within our stockade were rough sheds consisting mainly of a roof, with two or three widths of siding tacked on to the supporting posts, near to the roof. These afforded some shelter when the storms were directly overhead, but none to speak of against driving storms of wind and rain, when we suffered greatly. Under these sheds we constructed rough bunks of boards, raised from the ground upon short stakes. Beneath the floor timbers of an old structure standing within this stockade was a space about three feet in height, where for the first few days some of the officers found lodgings, and there, to afford more

room vertically, they burrowed out long grave-shaped trenches, having slopes leading down into them from the surface of the ground at the sides of the building.

By the aid of these sloping trenches they could get under the sills supporting the sides of the building, and once underneath they would use the ground at either side of the trenches for bedroom at night and as sitting-places by day ; the trenches serving for leg and foot room. But at the first hard storm the trenches became full of water, and the human rats being thus drowned out, they forsook the trenches and sought for spare lodgings in the sheds.

Two tunnels, a large and a small one, were soon under way, entrance shafts thereto being opened under bunks in the sheds, the work of digging being zealously pushed at night, and the entrance ways being covered up by day ; the earth therefrom being taken in bags by night, to the stream at the foot of the grounds. A party of ten, to which I belonged, worked at the smaller of the two tunnels, which was designed to be about thirty feet long. It was near completion, when the existence of both becoming known to Captain Davis, the rebel official in charge, he one morning sent in a guard, drove the prisoners to a remote corner of the stockade, and bringing in a squad of men with picks and shovels caused the shafts of both tunnels to be filled up. On entering the stockade he led the squad directly to the entrance of both tunnels, indicating that he knew the precise location, and that we had been "betrayed in the house of our friends."

A cavalry officer was paroled shortly after, to whom this treachery was generally attributed. His parole probably saved his neck, as suspicion had already been excited respecting him. He was a native of Missouri but a member of an Illinois cavalry regiment.

Captain Powell, of the 146th New York, and myself made little ladders, loosened some pickets, and watched for a chance to get through the fence, or dead line, and to scale the stockade, but the guards were too vigilant for us.

The Captain (afterwards Major Powell) has lately written a



letter which is attached to this paper, referring to this attempt, and also to my escape from the column a few weeks later, when the prisoners were marched out from the Macon stockade.

Some malicious shooting was done ; a lieutenant from New York being killed, and several others wounded, for touching or approaching the picket fence. In the case of the lieutenant, he had washed his clothes at the stream, and hung some of them upon the picket fence, when a sentinel without provocation shot him dead.

Fourth of July was celebrated with speeches and songs, one officer producing and waving a tiny United States flag. This ceremony the rebs threatened to interfere with, but we persevered and gave them some hearty Union songs.

Fifty officers were sent from Macon to Charleston, and placed under range of our shells there, in hopes that it would compel Uncle Sam to forego shelling that city,—but this seeming misfortune proved to be a blessing in disguise, for we learned that the party was shortly after specially exchanged in return for a like number of rebels.

A committee came to Macon from the boys at Andersonville prison early in July, 1864, and they with many of the officers joined in a petition, which was sent to President Lincoln, setting forth their condition and our own, and praying in the name of God and Humanity for immediate exchange, but it was never heard from. Another special object of this visit of the boys, was to take counsel with the officers regarding the punishment of certain bad ones among the boys at Andersonville, who were robbing and maltreating their comrades, and General Winder was said to have permitted the visit for this special purpose.

“ Fresh fish ” were constantly arriving from our army in Virginia, from Sherman’s army then north of Atlanta, and from other points along the contending lines, some even from Louisiana, so that the number of prisoners at Macon on the 28th of July, 1864, reached upwards of seventeen hundred, all commissioned officers. The fact that so many Union officers were ever held as prisoners at any one time has invariably excited surprise, when stated, but it is not the less a fact. Indeed, the



number increased from that time on, and was somewhat larger when we were removed to Charleston, and rose to upwards of eighteen hundred early in October, 1864, when we reached Columbia, S. C.

Because of rumors that a cavalry force was coming from Sherman's army, six hundred officers were on the night of the 27th of July marched out of the stockade at Macon, through the city streets, to the railroad station, and thence were sent in box freight cars to Savannah, and a similar party was brought out the next night, for the same destination. Captain Powell and myself were in this latter party.

Passing along in column of fours with Captain Powell and other friends, through a densely shaded street, and noting a want of vigilance on the part of the old men and boys acting as guards, who walked at each side of the column at irregular intervals of from twenty to forty feet, I skipped from the column, at first to a place behind one of the large trees at the side of the road, then across the sidewalk and over the fence, and then through gardens and dooryards to the next street.

It was a mystery, as Captain Powell says, that I was not fired upon, but it must remain so, for I can't explain it.

With an old slouch hat, the original top replaced with a piece of bagging, and a blanket pinned with a stick that served to conceal my blue coat, I made a presentable regulation rebel, well disguised, except for the blue pants, which however were faded, ragged, and dirty.

A lead-pencil tracing of a map of Georgia, a diary and pencil, and a few hard tack, baked in anticipation of escape through the tunnel, comprised my entire possessions, except a stern determination, if Providence would permit, to reach the Union lines, which were then on the Chattahoochee, southwest of Atlanta, and about seventy-five miles distant.

At Vineville, at the north end of Macon, I passed a group of hospital tents, where the attendants were moving about with lights, some of them torches of pitch pine. These torches, flaring here and there in the darkness, seemed to my excited nerves to have an unearthly glare, as if borne by demons just up from the pit.

A little farther out, but a little in advance of me, I discovered guards picketing the highway, who were so stationed evidently in anticipation of a raid from Stoneman's cavalry. I came near running right up to them, but discovered them in time to make a detour through the fields.

Tramping mostly by night and keeping the woods by day, I was watchful at all points where roads intersected, and also at bridges, and took special care to avoid passing through settlements, usually going entirely around a settlement by the fields or woods, rather than run the risk of meeting anyone on the highway.

The season was dry and water very scarce. Once at about midnight when I was thirsty beyond endurance, I climbed over into a tank that stood upon a high platform at a railway station, in which I found but little water, and that very stale, but I took deep drafts of it, foul as it was. It was with great difficulty that I got out of the tank, and succeeded in doing so only by finding a place where I got a bearing for the toe of my foot. For a few moments when standing in the water in that tank, I thought the game was up! The water was so nauseous that I became deathly sick shortly after, and had not only to forego marching but lay by in the woods for the rest of the night, and the better part of the next day, having no food but dry crackers and no water.

My course was at first northwesterly toward Atlanta along the line of the Georgia railroad and near to Barnesville and Forsyth, but from north of the latter place I took a more westerly course, along or near a highway leading westerly from Griffin towards Noonan, Georgia, to and across the Chattahoochee River. Before leaving Macon, I had learned that cavalry from Sherman's army was stationed at the fords along the right bank of the Chattahoochee, for twenty to thirty miles below, or to the southwest of, Atlanta; and my purpose was to reach and cross the river, and find the cavalry.

On the afternoon of the fourth or fifth day out from Macon, I was aroused from my sleep by a white man driving two cows out of the wood, but as he seemed to be about as much fright-

ened as I was, we got together and had a talk. He claimed to be a Union man, and said that he had been pressed into the rebel service for a time, but got out because of disability. We finally struck a bargain, whereby he was to give me a rebel jacket, something to eat, and \$25 in Confederacy currency, in exchange for my blue officer's coat, to which he took a fancy, although it was worn quite threadbare. I was suspicious of him, but went with him to the edge of the "clarin," where I watched him while he went to his house and returned with the goods. The jacket proved to be a dangerous acquisition. The same day I sat down and wrote with a pencil, on a slip of paper from my diary, what purported to be a furlough to a rebel soldier who had been an inmate of a hospital at Griffin, which, as I learned from the man who got my blue coat, was a place near by, to which the sick and wounded from Hood's army at Atlanta were brought for treatment.

At about six o'clock in the morning of the next day, having kept the highway till too late an hour (in haste to reach the Chattahoochee River, then about ten miles distant to the west), a rear scout of three, one of whom was a commissary sergeant came riding towards me from the west, around a bend in the road; and the road being fenced, with cleared fields at each side, there was no chance to avoid them. I pleaded that I was a soldier on furlough. They asked me for my "showance," and remarked that the surgeon was a damn fool to write a showance with a lead pencil. Another noted my blue pants, and said, "You all aint none of we uns. Peers like yer one of these Yankee spies, got over the river yer, and lost yer horse," and he proposed to hang me to a tree, to make me disclose who I was. The sergeant made a suggestion more acceptable to me, and said that he would take me to the captain, who it seemed was with the company a few miles distant back toward Griffin. His view prevailed, and I mounted his horse behind him explaining to him on the way who I was.

Coming up with the company, and accepting a temporary parole, I joined its officers in a square meal at a farmhouse. A large bowl of apple butter, and piles of good corn-bread, smok-

ing hot, loom up to mind to-day as the big features of that delicious, not-to-be-forgotten—meal, the first veritable square meal for over a year.

Arriving at Griffin and parole withdrawn, I was placed that night with a party of rebel deserters held as prisoners, on the second floor of a small dwelling then used as a guard-house ; one guard constantly in the room, and others below at the entrance.

One of the guards who came on duty in the guard-room getting to sleep after midnight, I made an attempt to drop from a side window, but was detected and thrust forcibly back to my bench, and the next day I was sent back by rail under guard to Macon, leaving Griffin quite full of sick and wounded rebels, from the battles at Atlanta.

Arriving at the stockade, I gave Captain Davis the most entertaining description possible regarding the escape, to get him in good humor, lest, instead of being returned to the stockade he might order me to be lodged in the local jail, a kind of afterclap not infrequent upon recapture, but one much to be dreaded. The danger of being lodged in some local jail, if recaptured, was one of the things that deterred many from making any attempt to escape, on the principle of "Better let well enough alone."

Returning to the stockade, I found that the remainder of its former occupants, except a few "hospital rats," had also been sent on to Savannah or Charleston.

It is not kind to speak of our sick or convalescing comrades in such a way, but it was common to the prison vernacular, and it is used here for that reason.

General Stoneman, and about forty officers of his command who had been captured near Macon two or three days before (while on a raid designed for the release of the officers from Macon and the boys from Andersonville), were among the new arrivals, and being well dressed and in vigorous health and good spirits, were quite a contrast to the few dirty and ragged "old fish" present to greet them.

This little party of "old fish" and "fresh fish" was de-

spatched from Macon about the 12th of August to Charleston, by the usual freight-car method—guards at the side doors and on the top.

There we were placed in the "Penitentiary" adjoining the burned district, and there we found that the seventeen hundred officers who had preceded us from Macon by way of Savannah two or three weeks before were already in occupation, and that they filled to repletion the "Penitentiary," the adjacent "Nigger Jail," and the "Roper" and "Marine Hospital" buildings; and that the fifty officers who had been first to leave Macon for Charleston six weeks before had meanwhile been specially exchanged.

During our six weeks' stay at Charleston the booming of the "Swamp Angel" and other big guns of the Yankee batteries on Morris Island, and the singing of the big shells through the air, with the noises when bursting, and the crash and rattle of the fragments as they struck in the town, relieved the nights from monotony.

Late in September yellow fever prevailed in the city, and invaded the prisons, about ten officers from our building having been removed to hospitals and on the 4th of October Captain Grier, the rebel officer in charge, fell a victim, so at the demand of the citizens the prisoners were all despatched by rail to Columbia, S. C. Arriving there, we were placed under a strong guard in an open field about two miles west of the city, near the Saluda River, the field being bordered on the south by a piece of woods.

The story of my third, and successful attempt at escape deserves treatment in a separate paper to do it justice, as the thirty-four days' journey we took from the prison pen at "Old Camp Sorghum," Columbia, to the Union lines in Tennessee, were brimful of thrilling incidents, escaping recapture as we did on two occasions only by most merciful providences. Of this escape, I will give but a brief outline.

I premise with the statement that about eighteen hundred Union officers were then confined at Old Camp Sorghum at Columbia, S. C., and that our party of five was the first to escape



from that prison, and that the total number who escaped from there subsequently, and prior to the spring of 1865, when the officers were taken from Columbia to Wilmington, N. C., for final exchange, was about fifty.

Lieutenant George S. Hastings of the 23d New York Battery, a long-time friend of mine, and three officers of the 85th New York Volunteers, all four of whom were comparatively "fresh fish" (as they had been captured at Plymouth, N. C., in the April previous), together with the writer, an "old fish," lay out for several nights near to the dead line at a point opposite and near to a piece of woods, watching for an opportunity to cross the dead line and guard line.

The others had money, and with it had purchased of the sutler some corn-meal, salt, and matches, and of a friendly dorky, some garlic and a bottle of turpentine. The dead line was marked by a row of stakes and was about thirty feet inside the line for the guards, who were stationed less than one hundred feet apart. On the fourth night the guards built little fires, and we took note of the fact that gazing at the fire had the effect of making the surrounding darkness seem more dense. Occasionally they halted at the fires to converse. Seizing the opportunity presented when two guards were conversing at one of the fires, and another was sitting at the next, and moved by a common impulse, we crouched down, and stealthily crossed the space between the dead line and guard line, crossing the latter about midway between the fires, and thence crept forward into the woods. That we were not detected, or heard, or fired upon, was something little short of miraculous.

Losing our bearings, we made but little progress that night, and lay in the woods next day at a point dangerously near, for we could hear the music of the guard mounting at the camp.

We trusted to friends in camp, by the process of repeating at roll-call, to keep our exit from the knowledge of the jailers.

Avoiding the highways, we struck off next night in a northwesterly direction, following the general course of the Saluda River. Having stopped to dig at a sweet-potato patch, and

going perhaps two miles beyond, we heard behind us the yelping of dogs, and were soon convinced that we were followed. Then began a race for life and liberty for five or six miles, dashing through the woods and brush and crossing ravines and streams.

Finally, the dogs gaining rapidly upon us, we struck a broad "clarin" used as a cornfield, where the corn stood in stacks. Here we put turpentine and garlic on our pants and shoes, and on the far side of this "clarin" we fortunately struck a deep stream, bordered beyond by dense woods. This we crossed in water waist deep, and plunged into the woods. At or about the stream the dogs entirely lost the trail, as we soon became convinced by a loud chorus of disappointed yelping, that gradually became less and less distinct as we advanced, and pushing forward for two or three miles farther, the whole party sank to the ground completely exhausted.

We kept the trail at night, lying by during the day, and as hunger and privation did not entirely extinguish the spark of sentiment and romance within us, we attached to each day camp some appropriate name, symbolic to some extent of our special experiences there.

So, on the third day out, having encountered a tall lean white woman, by name Mrs. Cook, with two daughters still more attenuated, who were gathering corn in a field near by (the old lady promising out of sympathy not to betray us, as she had two darling boys in the rebel army, who might get into like danger), we called that spot "Camp Cook."

The next was "Camp Saluda," and the next "Scrub Oak Camp," and the next about fifty miles from Columbia, where we secured sweet potatoes, and where we had a fine bath and a good rest, we termed "Camp Repose."

The next camp near to the railroad leading to Greenville we called "Railroad Camp," and the next, where we found Uncle Charles, who supplied us at nightfall with corn-bread, bacon, and a bottle of sorghum (with our blessings upon the old darky), we called "Camp Mercy."

A camp in a thicket was "Camp Laurel," and another

near the railroad leading from Columbia to Greenville we called "Camp 98," it being not far from a station of that name. Near there I had the great misfortune to lose a diary containing daily notes of a year-and-ten-months' camp and prison service; the record of the ten months of 1864 being written across the pages of the record for the previous year.

So on, from point to point, skirting Greenville, we approached Jones's pass, which is a very deep defile through the Blue Ridge, made by a stream which, flowing southeasterly through the mountains into South Carolina, from the higher tablelands of North Carolina joins the Saluda at a point near Greenville, S. C.

A merciful Providence again protected us at this point, for exhausted we turned into the woods long before night, whereas, had we gone but a few rods farther, we would have come upon a group of men acting as sentries at a picket post, guarding the entrance to that deep defile.

We had just fallen into a deep sleep when we were quickly roused by hearing distinctly and quite near to us the loud call: "Corporal of the guard, Post No. 1."

Startled beyond expression, we picked up our duds and crept back into the woods, where we shortly afterwards fell in with "Uncle John Turner," a free colored man, who supplied us with provisions, and the next night, under his guidance, we made a big circuit of that picket post and struck up into the pass. This, our last stop in South Carolina, we called "Camp Deliverance." It was a dangerous and long defile, and we dreaded lest we should be intercepted, for once in it, there was no way out except to go clear through, as we did, without any adventure except a terrific storm of rain. The pass was so lengthy and the situation so perilous, because of the precipitous walls that precluded any escape by its sides, that we held a council of war, with the result that two voted to go back and find another way, and three to go on, so we proceeded, and travelling partly by day, we reached higher ground in North Carolina the next evening.

Here, having a rebel jacket, I acted as scout for the party,

and in quest of information followed a light into the woods, where I discovered in a low hovel a white woman and three or four daughters, living in the very depths of destitution ; the only food in the place being corn on the ear, and two stones on the hearth their only means for grinding or crushing it.

In the guise of a rebel soldier home on furlough, I learned from them the route to the house of "Uncle Billy Case," a white man, whom "Uncle John Turner" had described to us as "a froo Union man, who libs a right smart walk fro' the mouf of de pass, way up yer on de mountain-side, in Norf Carolina." "I knowed him," he said, "from way back afo' de war." And I learned from the women also that we would meet with a picket post "a right smart bit down de road, whar de road splits up, and whar de fire is."

Trudging along through the storm we found the picket post at the crossroads sure enough, the men sitting at the door of a shanty, around a low fire ; and giving it a wide range we pressed on several miles till we reached Uncle Case's. Learning who we were, he roused his wife, little son, and two colored women, put up blankets at the windows, and the boy outside as sentry, and we had a sumptuous meal. Under the guidance of the lad we trudged on that night, still in the storm, and upon a miry road, at many points intersected and flooded by a bordering stream, till we brought up at daylight at the home of a Union woman, whose husband was serving as a conscript in the rebel army, but who had two faithful blacks at home. They led us to a secluded den in the woods on the mountain-side, and supplied us with food, and there we lay for the day. During the day we had a near view of a squad of rebel cavalry that rode up to the house and barns in quest of forage, and had a visit at our den from a Union white man, well armed, who was lying out in the mountains, fearing for his life if he remained at home.

Next night the two blacks led us on by by-paths and mountain-trails till we reached, just before daylight, a house away up in a "clarin'" in a bowl on the wooded mountain-side, where lived Uncle Bob Hamilton, late Sheriff of Transylvania County.



On the way there, and to obtain a brief shelter from the driving storm, our guides led us up by a narrow mountain-trail to a hut in a gulch, where a few colored people had gathered who had been apprised of our coming. It was lighted with a single tallow dip, and with the storm roaring without and the dim light within, it seemed indeed a ghostly place. As soon as we arrived they fell to praying, and prayed "dat de good Lord might see dese blessed Yankees safe, all de way froo, to de promised land of freedom." "Uncle Bob" was tall and gaunt in stature and big of heart, and his text-books were the Bible and a worn copy of the *History of the United States*. At the close of the war we sent "Uncle Bob," God bless him, a goodly box of things needful for body and mind.

After five days here, lying in a cove in the mountain by day, and for meals going to and from the house by night, and our sojourn being enlivened by a supper party at Sheriff Neals, two miles away (when Neals's family caught their first sight of genuine Yankees, the women admitting that they had verily believed we had horns), we started to cross the Alleghanies towards Knoxville, Tenn.

Strange to relate, another party of five, officers of Pennsylvania and New York troops, that had escaped from the cars while *en route* from Charleston to Columbia, was brought over to us from Buncombe, the adjoining county, coming by what was called down there "the underground road," but in fact by abandoned trails along near the tops of the mountains and mountain ridges. This party had struck directly north into North Carolina from the point of escape on the railroad in South Carolina, and had made their journey mostly in North Carolina, and had met with fewer obstacles than we did. We were also joined by a nondescript party of nineteen and a guide, some of them Union men and others deserters from the rebel army, who had been lying out in the neighboring mountains, and they eagerly caught at the chance of getting through with us to our lines. Five or six of this party were indifferently armed, but their presence with us heightened the danger.

A home guard of rebel militia got after us as we were leav-



ing the Mills River valley, near Ashville, wounded one of those with us and captured him with two others, but the rest of us, striking at once up the wooded side of the mountain, and avoiding all trails, by the aid of favoring darkness and a drenching storm, eluded pursuit. The guide proved of little service, as our presence in the mountains being known, to avoid being intercepted we left the main trails and followed chiefly the leading ridges and obscure paths, remote from the valleys, and around and near the peaks of the mountains.

For six days and nights we continued in the Alleghany Mountains, without sight of a human being, before reaching the low lands in Tennessee. It was a time of extreme hardship, for the bread rations that we got at Hamilton's were soon exhausted, having become soaked by the rain that prevailed for the first few days, so that for the last three we subsisted mainly on chestnuts.

One night, when far up above the line of vegetation on the side of Mount Pisgah, and when it was too dark and dangerous to advance, we lay with the rocks for a bed, and the storm and water from the crags above poured down upon us in copious and in continual streams, some of us wellnigh perishing with cold.

Upon the 10th of November, a clear day, and the very day when Lincoln was elected President for the second term, we stood upon the highest ridge of the "Smoky Range," when a vision of natural beauty burst upon us, hardly to be equalled upon this side of the Rockies. The whole of eastern Tennessee lay before us, its picturesque rolling lands, intersected by the French Broad, the Holston, and the Big and Little Pigeon rivers, all flowing on toward Knoxville and forming the Tennessee; and across the broad valley and far beyond, the blue mountains of the Cumberland Range loomed up toward the sky, bounding on the north that expansive and beautiful territory known as the valley of the Tennessee.

We were not yet free from dangers, as bands of rebel troopers ranged throughout all the low lands of that section, but we now strode on rapidly, avoiding main highways, and

at all camping spots, whether by day or night, we threw out pickets.

We passed *en route* a small party of armed Union men, digging a grave for an aged Unionist, who had been shot by rebel brigands at his own doorway, only the day before.

The deserters being still with us, we formed a ragged and unsightly party, and the gravediggers, believing us to be another band of rebel cut-throats, on our approach dropped their spades and fled to the hills, armed as they were, and we only got speech with them after a long parley, and by sending forward one of our number as a truce maker.

On a Sabbath morning, just after light, and thirty-four days out from prison, we reached Strawberry Plains, twenty miles east of Knoxville; the guards upon the work suspecting us to be a party of Johnnies, not permitting us to approach till after summoning their officers.

Here the hospitable 4th Michigan Cavalry spread for us, under the trees, a royal repast; and here and at Knoxville some of the refugees of our party enlisted in the Union Army.

We rode on that night to Knoxville under cavalry escort, and being the first prisoners who had arrived from the south by the mountain route, we were received with much enthusiasm by the citizens, and by the large Union force then in occupation. Some of us then enjoyed a hotel table, a bath in a tub, and a sleep between sheets, for the first time in nearly two years.

A famous writer speaks of "Liberty, eternal spirit of the chainless mind, [as] brightest in dungeons." We found her brightest and best, as we felt her breath in the mountains, as we looked over the green fields and smiling, sunny valleys of East Tennessee, beckoning us on still nearer to our goal; and the keen sense of Liberty was still more intense, as we lay upon the grassy slopes at Strawberry Plains, gazing upon that brightest emblem of Liberty the whole world over, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

76 Jefferson Ave. Grand Rapids, Mich.,

May 2d, 1892.

MR. GEO. H. STARR :

My Dear Friend : Your letter has come almost too late for a reply. I have hardly ten minutes before it must be mailed, and can of course say but little and that very hastily.

Twenty-eight years is a long time to remember details. But some things were so burned into memory that all eternity will not erase the scars. Among them are many prison horrors and incidents ; and I will also add many examples of heroism on the part of fellow prisoners. I well remember that old Macon stockade with its dead line of picket fence, and its brass cannon looking hungrily down upon us, and its guard, some of whom were proud to shoot an unarmed Yankee, and our 4th of July celebration, the memory of which even now makes my blood tingle. We made a flag of such old rags as we could get hold of, fastened it to a stick, and the stick to the top of a tree that stood in the midst of the grounds. Then all who were able to stand, and some who were not, gathered about the tree ; such speeches, such songs, such cheers as went up from that company were worthy of the birthday of Liberty.

The commandant of the camp was angry and ordered the flag down. He was told to take it down if he could or dared. He called out his guards, shotted his brass guns, and once more ordered the flag down. Not a man flinched, but dared him to take it down or even make the attempt. It was not taken down, and for aught I know, floats there still.

And I also well remember planning an escape with one Captain Geo. H. Starr, an old college friend with pluck enough for any emergency. We made a little ladder with which we proposed scaling the high fence outside the dead lines some dark night, and slipping between the guards while on duty. We also loosened a number of pickets on the " dead line " so as to be able to pass it without delay. This was done by prying them off at the bottom, and was accomplished with great risk, for to touch that fence was to become a target.

This plan would surely have been attempted had not the discovery of a tunnel dug with great toil been made, which resulted in an increase of guards as well as of watchfulness.

Our attempt was also made impracticable by the removal of a number of us to Charleston, S. C. While that removal was being

made, or when we were being marched under guard from the stockade to the cars, I well remember how you slipped out of the ranks and in some unaccountable manner made your escape. Just how you dared must be told by yourself, and just why you were not perforated with bullet and bayonet is an unexplained mystery.

But I must stop or lose the mail. Excuse haste. I have not a moment to revise, or to express myself save in the most hasty manner. In haste,

Sincerely yours,

I. P. POWELL,

Maj. 146th, N. Y. V.

## THE NAVY IN THE BATTLES AND CAPTURE OF FORT FISHER.

A Paper Read by Lieutenant-Commander JAMES PARKER, late U. S. Navy,  
October 5, 1892.

WHO of us can, or would, ever forget the storm of patriotic indignation that swept over the land on the 13th of April, 1861, when the news was published that, for the first time in its history, the flag of the Union had been lowered in shame, at the demand of those who should have remembered Sergeant Jasper and been its stoutest defenders.

In a moment all distinction of party, all differences of opinion, that had swayed us in the past, were swept away; and the whole North stood forth as one, in the determination to put that flag back again. And *there it floats*, where a reunited people may almost *see* upon its glorious folds the legend inscribed by the eloquence of Webster: "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

I was then a young fellow in Cincinnati, trying to make a living at the law for myself, my wife, and three children.

I was, as I still am, an ardent Democrat in politics. I had married a Virginia girl. But Uncle Sam, at his naval school, had educated me to be one of his defenders in any such strait as then confronted him. I had already served him in the Mexican War as a midshipman, under that greatest of all naval commanders—who has honored this Commandery of the Loyal Legion as its presiding officer—David G. Farragut.

My duty was too plain to admit of doubt or delay; and I on that day (two days before President Lincoln's call for volunteers) sent my offer to resume my old place as an officer of



the navy. When I went home to dinner I told my Virginia wife what I had done. All her family, friends, and relatives were in the South. We talked the matter over, and then, after a short silence, she said: "Well, my husband, you have done what you thought was right, and though all I love, except you and the children, will be on the other side, do you do your duty and I will do all I can to help you do it," and, God bless her! she faithfully kept her word.

And here let me speak a few words for those whose devotion and self-sacrifice are so much a matter of course that I fear they are not always rightly appreciated.

To us men, performance of duty brings little rending of heart-strings. Ambition, excitement, patriotic impulses, carry us on and support us. If we are called upon to make the last sacrifice, 't is but a pang ere 't is over; but the women, with streaming eyes and anguished hearts, saw their husbands, fathers, lovers, and brothers march away; and they lived, during their whole absence through those dreadful years, in a constant agony of apprehension lest they should see the faces of their loved ones no more in this life. The self-sacrifice, great as it was, of the men is not to be compared to theirs; and I say God bless the mothers, sweethearts, wives, and daughters who blessed us as we stepped to the front in those days of doubt and fear, of alternating hopefulness and despair!

In the fall of 1864, it was evident that the end of the Civil War was at hand. In July, 1863, the battle of Gettysburg, and the capture of Vicksburg and Port Hudson (which had opened the Mississippi from "Cairo to the sea") had stayed the flood-tide of Confederate hope: there were a few moments of slack-water (so to speak), during which the armies at the East rested preparatory to the final struggle that the opening of 1864 was sure to bring; but the reverses which the Confederates had met with all through the campaign of the latter year, at the West as well as in the East, had turned the tide into full, strong ebb.

It is true that the Confederates claimed every great battle of that year as a victory for their arms (and if there is any comfort to them in that belief I shall not endeavor to deprive

them of it); but the fact remains that, whether victorious in detail or not, the doomed Confederacy had at last been "brought to bay."

Grant and Meade with the "Army of the Potomac" gripped Lee and his half-famished battalions, as in a vice, before Petersburg.

Sherman, after beating and scattering all that remained of the Confederate armies of the Southwest, was about to set out upon his march of fire and destruction through Georgia and the Carolinas, and Lee's veterans from those States felt a double twinge of despair as they added to their own distress the certainty that their wives and children would soon be without shelter or food.

Ever since the battle of the Alma the military world has gazed with admiration at the "thin line of red that stood to receive the charge of Russian cavalry." Think as we may of their cause, no grander example of devotion to any cause was ever given than that by Lee's army during all that winter of 1864-5. Hopeless, ragged, despairing, it stood and stretched out its thin line of defence, until at last it broke from very weakness; and when those veterans surrendered at Appomattox they were without food, and almost the first of General Grant's orders concerning them was to feed them.

Only two ports remained to them—Charleston and Wilmington. We knew that, as Sherman's army marched to its rear, the birthplace of the rebellion must fall without bloodshed; but Wilmington could hold out until Johnston and Lee joined forces, unless meantime it were taken by a combined naval and military attack; and, until so taken, through it the dying Confederacy could be stimulated and its ebbing life prolonged by supplies of arms and military stores.

Its capture was determined upon by the Navy Department as early as September, 1864; but it was not until the early part of December that the expedition departed from Hampton Roads for Beaufort, N. C., the place of rendezvous.

The command of the fleet was offered to Admiral Farragut, but his arduous service in the Gulf and Mississippi River had

worn him out, and he was reluctantly compelled to decline the honor. Rear-Admiral David D. Porter was appointed in his stead. That distinguished officer came of a fighting lineage. His father, Commodore David Porter, after fighting every British foe he could find in the War of 1812, fought with the Navy Department and resigned his commission; took service with the Mexicans to fight the Spaniards; after a while fought with the Mexican authorities and resigned from that service. General Jackson then offered to restore him to the navy, but he declined on a punctilio; and was finally sent as *Chargé d'Affaires* to Constantinople. But he was never fairly conquered until death became his victor there; and his body, even then, was brought home in a fighting ship to lie peacefully at last. I expect that when the last trumpet sounds, he will arise in war paint, and insist upon fighting his fate (if he does n't like it) before the judgment seat.

After some delays the fleet and the transports, with about seven thousand soldiers, arrived off Fort Fisher on Dec. 18th. A heavy gale set in and for three days "blew great guns." The military contingent was commanded, as you know, by General B. F. Butler, of whom, in my judgment, it may be truthfully said, "his pen was mightier than his sword." A new engine of war was to be employed that, it was expected, would make the work of the reduction of the fort comparatively easy. I allude to the famous powder boat before which we expected its walls to fall down as promptly as did those of Jericho before the "trumpets of rams' horns" of the Israelites. But we could not "compass the wall for seven days," as they did, and although we did, with the opportune help of that gale of wind, "blow lustily," the thing proved a great failure. Who suggested this powder-boat scheme is not now known. We all believed in it, however, from the Admiral down; but when it proved so laughable a failure we of the navy lied its paternity upon General Butler. It was exploded on the night of Dec. 23d. It did n't make much of a noise; and as to its effect upon the fort, I am informed by a prominent lawyer of this city, who was a Confederate midshipman in the fort, that a

green North Carolina "tarheel" sentinel reported, when his relief came around, that he "reckoned one of them Yankee gunboats off thar had done busted her biler."

The fleet moved in next morning to the attack. There lay the fort, as grim as ever. The ironclads first took position, and then the wooden ships followed, the frigate *Minnesota* (of which I was executive officer) leading. It was my first experience in battle. The *Minnesota* was a slow-moving ship, drew twenty-four and one-half feet of water, and great caution was requisite lest she should get aground. The fort had received the fire from the ironclads in silence; but as the *Minnesota* passed into clear view a puff from the centre of the fort, followed by others all along the line, showed that our time of trial had come.

A few seconds later the shriek of the shells and their explosion made music very disagreeable to my ear. I confess that I did n't like the situation. Was I scared? Well, no; but I did n't want my wife to become a widow, you know.

As fast as the ships came into line they anchored, until the whole formed nearly a semicircle, distant about half a mile from the fort. The Admiral in his flag-ship (with my friend, our amiable companion, Aaron Vanderbilt, as his signal officer) steamed up and down the line. The fire kept up all that day was terrific. In a little while that from the fort ceased; but the ships kept it up until nightfall. After a consultation, it was arranged that the troops should be landed next day, and assault, under cover of the naval fire, in the afternoon. The next morning the reserve vessels were sent in to protect and assist in the landing; and the fleet moved up again to the attack. By two or three o'clock about five thousand men had landed and marched up toward the fort. The fleet kept up the bombardment all day, momentarily expecting that the assault would be made. It was Christmas Day—the birthday of the Prince of Peace. At home the children were rejoicing over the wealth that Santa Claus had bestowed; and there, many thousands of men, who would have felt insulted to be told that they were not Christians, were engaged in fratricidal warfare.



About six o'clock it was seen that the troops were re-embarking, and upon inquiry it was learned that General Butler had determined that the fort could not be taken and that the military part of the expedition would be withdrawn to Fortress Monroe.

All remonstrance addressed to him was in vain. In vain our companion, brave General Curtis, begged to be allowed to make an effort to capture the fort. Butler persisted in his determination to take the troops away, and away they all went that night accordingly.

This is neither the time nor place to discuss the propriety of this action. We could only do as sailors are wont to do (occasionally), and if that doughty warrior does n't find out the full meaning of "sheol," it won't be for want of the prayers of the officers and men of that fleet in their behalf.

During the progress of the battle on Christmas Day I heard a captain of a nine-inch gun say : " Boys, I 'm going to shoot down that rebel flag on the left of that fort." He fired the gun. I watched the flight of the shell and saw it cut the flag-staff in two and the flag fall. It was, of course, a chance shot.

That flag was never raised again ; and one of General Curtis's soldiers went into the fort, and, unmolested, brought it away in safety. If this could be done, the uneducated mind, not so profoundly versed in the military science as was General Butler, may be pardoned a belief that more soldiers might have followed that one into that fort.

We of the navy had come there to take Fort Fisher ; a big growl went up to Washington, and when General Grant learned of Butler's retreat he sent the same troops back reinforced, but under command of Major-General Alfred H. Terry, and so promptly was action taken that, on Jan. 12, 1865, the fleet and the transports reappeared off Fort Fisher. The Confederates had in the meantime not been idle, and the fort, as well as its garrison, had been greatly strengthened.

Inasmuch as General Butler had insinuated that the navy had not done all that had been expected of it in the previous attack, Admiral Porter had determined that now we would not



only do our duty, but that we would send an assaulting party ashore, and help the soldiers do their work. Accordingly, about two thousand three hundred officers and men had been detailed for that purpose.

Colonel William Lamb, the Confederate commander of the fort, and I had been acquaintances before the war. He has described the fort thus, saying :

“The plans were my own, and the work, as it progressed, was approved by French, Raines, Longstreet, Beauregard, and Whiting (all eminent engineers). The total length of the two faces of the work was about 2850 yards (about a mile and three quarters). The land face (extending diagonally across the peninsula between the Cape Fear River and the sea) mounted twenty of the heaviest sea-coast guns and was 682 yards long. The sea face, with twenty-four equally heavy guns, was 1898 yards long. The land face began on the left and included Shepherd’s battery, which I doubled in strength.

“Unfortunately, to save labor, I followed its lines for my left salient—the weak point of the work. The land face extended from this battery to the N. E. redan, the line being a series of isolated gun chambers with revetments five feet nine inches high, parapet thirty feet thick, and traverses sixty by fifty and twenty-five feet high.

“From the N. E. redan (which was forty feet high), the work extended to the mound battery, which was sixty feet high, and mounted two very heavy guns. A palisade was erected to prevent a sudden landing and assault by a boat party and sub-terra batteries were placed there for the same purpose.”

At eight o’clock in the morning of the 13th the whole fleet (except the ironclads which opened fire on the fort) anchored in a semicircle around the transports, and our boats proceeded to land the troops. At the Admiral’s suggestion, no boats for that purpose had been brought by the quartermaster. By three P.M. we had landed eight thousand men, with their proper supplies and military stores.

When this was done, our Admiral was heard to say (*sotto voce*, of course): “Now, if those soldiers want to get back to

their ships they 'll have to swim, for I 'll be d——d if I 'll let them have any boats to come off in." If he had known that gallant and accomplished soldier and patriot, Terry, as well as we know him now, he would have been saved the necessity of any such remark, for he and all his men had determined to take that fort this time, or leave their bodies for burial on that beach.

After landing the troops, the fleet moved up to the bombardment. All that day and night, and all the next, the fire was kept up, during which the troops were taking position. On the morning of the 15th, at eleven o'clock, the naval assaulting party landed. Imagine the beauty of the sight. As lovely a day as ever brightened the earth ; a placid sea, whose waves danced and shone like liquid silver ; fifty-eight ships, gaily dressed with flags at each masthead and peak and bowsprit, enveloped by the smoke from three hundred guns, whose roar deafened the ear ; more than a hundred boats of every size, each carrying the flag of the Union, and loaded to the gunwale with men eager to do and dare to plant the flag in victory upon the fort. Could there be a more magnificent spectacle ?

The military had naturally selected the left salient (described by Colonel Lamb as "the weakest part of the work") for their point of assault, and their approach was covered by woods and sand hills to within a short distance of the salient. The order of Admiral Porter directed the naval party to assault the centre, which was located within about three hundred feet of the water's edge. We were thus compelled to march from our landing place for about a mile on a sandy beach as flat as the floor of this room, without any trees or other protection. The fire from the ships had been so effective that not a single gun (except one small Napoleon field-piece) could be fired at the army, while nearly all the guns on the sea face could be, and were, used against us from the moment we began our march.

Of the effect of the naval fire from the ships, Colonel Lamb has said :

"Before the assault fifty thousand shells had expended their fury upon the work. Every gun was destroyed, except one ; every wire

leading to the mines plowed up, and the palisade made such a wreck as actually to afford a protection to some of the assailants. The terrific fire in front, rear, and enfilade from the fleet upon the land face, rendering the salient practicable for assault, forced me to cover by bombproof all the troops on the land face, except the sharpshooters protected by the traverses. There were in the western salient about two hundred and fifty men."

These were all that were to resist the attack of more than six thousand veterans from the Army of the Potomac.

It had been arranged that we were to assault when we saw the army rushing in, and, as they gave no sign, we lay down (after moving up sufficiently near) on the shore, where the shelving of the beach gave some shelter, to await their attack. In this position the shells of the fleet flew over us on the way to the fort, and the noise they and the guns made would have done no discredit to pandemonium itself; while, occasionally, a shell would burst prematurely and scatter its murderous fragments in our midst. About three o'clock the troops were seen to emerge from the woods and rush to the assault. In an instant the fire from the fleet ceased; fifty-eight steam whistles set up a dismal shriek (I verily believe that those "trumpets of rams' horns" were not such an absurd means of warfare after all). We sprang up and made an effort to obey the Admiral's order to "board the fort in a seamanlike manner." It was an impossible task. The rush up was gallantly made, but we found the fort to be forty feet high, and as nearly perpendicular as a sand fort could be made. The enemy treated us to liberal doses of grape (I never before fully appreciated the force of General Taylor's order, "A little more grape, Captain Bragg"), while one thousand two hundred men were posted on the ramparts to fire down upon us. Naval history may be searched in vain for another such instance of assault by sailors. There had been instances where sailors had landed close under small batteries (Teneriffe, where Nelson lost his arm, is one such case), but never before had such a force been landed, without organization, or plan, or knowledge of the work to be done, to attempt such an assault. I don't believe it will ever

be tried again. The fire from the parapet was terrific and we had pistols only to reply. It was a mere slaughter-house, and after taking in the utter impossibility of any further effort, Jack sensibly concluded that the next best and most seaman-like thing he could do would be to get out of that, and, suiting the action to the word, the whole of the force that could do so scudded away down the beach, like ships before the wind, as fast as their legs could carry them. They were not panic-stricken, not a bit of it, but they knew that nothing else could save them from annihilation.

About sixty of us, including myself, took refuge behind the stockade, and there remained until the fort surrendered. As we lay there and looked at the beach, a woful sight was seen. Four officers and seventy-four men had been killed; fifteen officers and two hundred and thirteen men had been wounded—nearly one-seventh of the whole force.

After our repulse, Colonel Lamb drew his men away to endeavor to dislodge the army. The fight was kept up most gallantly on both sides; the *Ironsides*, with her eleven-inch guns firing upon the Confederates on their side of a traverse and driving them out, and thus, when all the Confederate commanding officers had fallen, the fort was taken. About ten o'clock at night we sailors (who had been all this time lying under the stockade wondering which of the southern prisons was to be our fate) learned from the joyous sounding of the steam whistles of the fleet that the fort had surrendered. A glorious full moon had risen and shed her soft light upon the scene of the struggle; the waves rippled gently upon the strand; the lights of the fleet were reflected brightly on the almost calm sea; the ships soon became resplendent with fireworks burned in honor of the victory, and the whole scene was as brilliant as the beach at Coney Island on a summer's night, but the music was the groans of the wounded and dying, whose blood had stained the white sand to a crimson.

There were four or five lives laid that day upon the altar of duty, to which I would call attention. Two young lieutenants, S. W. Preston and B. F. Porter, had been captured by



the enemy in the attempt that the navy made (Sept. 8, 1863) to replant the flag on the ruins of Fort Sumter, were held in southern prisons for a long time, were exchanged shortly before the Fort Fisher expedition sailed, came North and remained only long enough to recruit a little and fit themselves out with gorgeous new uniforms, applied for service in that fleet, volunteered to take part in the assault, were both shot dead almost at the same moment, and died within a few yards of each other. Though nearly twenty-eight years have passed, I can see Porter's quivering body stretching out in the last composing agonies of death as I passed it lying on the white sand. He was a splendid specimen of young manhood ; and, acting in the chivalrous spirit which, of old, required officers to dress for battle in full uniform, he had attired himself in all his new glories of blue and gold, and he formed a shining mark.

Before Preston went ashore to take part in the assault, he expressed a presentiment that he would be killed, but he went solemnly and unflinchingly to what he felt was to be his death in the discharge of duty. Over such dead ones a mourning country may well utter the pathetic lamentation which David made over Saul and Jonathan: "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided."

Assistant Surgeon William Longshaw, from the *Minnesota* (who had greatly distinguished himself in battle off Charleston), volunteered to go ashore to attend to the wounded. I found his dead body on the beach the next morning with a bullet hole in the back of his head, lying upon the body of another dead man, whose needs he had evidently been ministering to when he was killed. Both bodies had been stripped naked. Some ghouls from our own forces had done this foul deed, for no Confederate had been near the spot.

Those members of this Commandery who had the pleasure last year of listening to Companion J. M. Harlan, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, will remember how vividly he described the struggles through which those who lived in the "Border States" passed in 1861, how the line of duty wound in and out through families, friends, lovers, separating



those nearest and dearest into hostile camps to fight and die in defence of hostile flags and principles.

When I came to the Navy Department at Washington, in 1861, I met there, in the corridor before the door of Secretary Welles, my old friend, wearing his uniform as lieutenant in the navy, Joseph D. Danels. We cordially greeted each other, and as we walked back and forth, talking of current events, I animadverted pretty strongly upon the conduct of those officers who had resigned their commissions to fight against the flag. He listened in silence for a time, and then, calling me by my old familiar name, said: "You must not be too hard on us poor devils."—"My God, Joe Danels, you have n't deserted the flag!" said I, as I looked at him in amazement. He then explained that, being a lieutenant on board the ship stationed at Baltimore (which was his home and that of his wife and children and all dear to him), and knowing that at any time he might be called on to fire on that city, he felt that it was a duty he could not perform, and so feeling, he thought that as an honorable man he had no right to retain his commission; but he had no sympathy with the rebellion, and would never raise his hand against the flag, and was there to try and get the Secretary to permit him to withdraw his resignation. Mr. Welles refused his request, and, dismissed him from the navy in common with all others who had resigned. He had afterward been appointed in the volunteer navy, and when the assault occurred was an "Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Commander" and the executive officer of the *Vanderbilt*. He had meanwhile contracted consumption and rose from his sick bunk to come and lead his men. When he reported to me, I said to him: "Joe, why did you come here? You are too weak for the work of to-day." "Parker," he replied, "do you remember what you said to me in the Navy Department four years ago?"—"Perfectly, Joe,"—"You did n't know how your words stung me, though you did n't mean them for me. This is the first chance I have had since then to redeem that fatal mistake and demonstrate my love for the Union. Do you think I could let it go by?"—"No, Joe; you're right. Go with your

men." As we marched to the front I saw him fall out of line. I went to him, and he said, with the bitterness of an overwhelming disappointment: "My strength is gone, and with it my last hope," and he laid his head on my shoulder and cried as though his heart was breaking. I put my arm around him, and we stood thus for a little while, I comforting him all I could, and I said to him: "Turn round, Joe; keep your face to the foe, and if I come out of this alive I'll see that justice is done you."

It was no fault of his that he was not in the front of the fray.

He went from that field to his home and his dying bed at Baltimore, from which he never rose again; but such reports were made about him, by myself and others, that he was restored to his old place in the regular navy, and he died knowing that his fault, if it was a fault, had been forgiven him by his country. He had been informed that he had been reinstated, and had been confirmed by the Senate. He died in the morning about eight o'clock; and half an hour later the postman brought his commission. His wife told me that she laid it in his dead hand. It was a strange fatality which brought him and me together on two such occasions, so widely separated by time and place; and I have never since been incredulous about the pathetic sorrow that gives such power to Hale's story of *Philip Nolan, the Man without a Country*. May God bless Joe Danels's memory and keep it ever green!

A few days thereafter three blockade runners came over the bar and anchored. The officers and passengers of one of them had gone in the cabin to rejoice at their safe arrival.

In the midst of their congratulations, and the popping of corks, there was a knock at the door. It was opened, and an officer in the uniform of the navy stepped in. "Gentlemen," he said, "I beg pardon for interrupting you to say that you are all prisoners and this vessel a prize; but if you're willing I'll join you in a glass of wine."—"Prisoners? Prize?"—"Yes; Fort Fisher was captured a couple of days ago."—"Well I'm ——! But, Yank, here's to you."

The battle of Fort Fisher was a "glorious victory." Of the depressing effect of its capture upon the Confederates there can be no question.

Two days after its fall, General Butler sat in the witness chair before the "Committee on the Conduct of the War" at Washington, explaining his failure to assault the fort on Christmas Day. He had, to his own satisfaction, demonstrated the impossibility of its capture. As he finished, the guns of the Navy Yard began a salute; a messenger entered and handed a paper to the chairman, who read it and handed it to his associates, who, in turn read it and handed it to the General.

The paper bore these words:

"NAVY DEPARTMENT, Jan. 17, 1865.

Fire a national salute in honor of the capture on the 15th instant of the rebel works on Federal Point (Fort Fisher), near Wilmington, N. C., by a combined attack of the army and navy.

"GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy."

The General gazed at it and said—nothing; of his thoughts, we have no record. Perhaps it gave him a new idea of the meaning of the expression, *The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*.

## ADMIRAL FARRAGUT'S PASSAGE OF PORT HUDSON.

An Address Delivered by WILLIAM T. MEREDITH (Late of the U. S. Navy),  
December 7, 1892.

FELLOW members of the Loyal Legion, a friend of mine, when he was a midshipman in the navy during the early days of the war, was serving in an old-fashioned sailing frigate under an old-fashioned commander, on the coast of Texas. It was dreary work up and down the desolate coast, a great big ship with a crew of three hundred men, and nothing to do but sail a bit, take in sail, and anchor a bit, day after day and month after month. Every one on board was cross and tired of the monotonous life and anxious to get away from the coast of Texas. The commodore kept himself busy maintaining the strictest discipline. What a well disciplined ship he had ! The crew did nothing but exercise at the guns and scrub and paint from morning till night.

One of the great delights of the old commodore was to have the decks holy-stoned with sand ; and when the sand gave out he would send a boat ashore along the coast to replenish the sand lockers from the beach. My friend the midshipman was always selected to command this sand boat. The coast of Texas, you know, has a shoal shore. It was often a pull of two miles and more for the boat's crew to get the sand. My friend the midshipman grew accustomed to a pull of two miles for sand. But one morning when the vessel lay at anchor four miles off the beach, the commodore made up his mind suddenly that he would have some sand, and so he summoned the midshipman and told him to take a boat's crew and go on the

usual errand. My friend felt lazy that day and he said, "Commodore, I protest against going four miles and through a bad surf for a boat load of sand." "Very good, Mr. Midshipman," replied the commodore, "you can protest as much as you please, but you will go after the sand." And he did go after sand.

So it was with me, fellow members of the Loyal Legion: when I was told I must spin a yarn on the war for the Loyal Legion, I said it was a long time off to the war; but my commanding officer said I must go after sand, and so here I am, and I hope I have the sand to entertain you.

I want to tell you about the passage of Port Hudson on the night of March the 14th, 1863, where I was on the flag-ship *Hartford*. The recollection of that engagement has been a little dimmed in our minds as time has passed on, but it really forms a very important point in the history of our great Admiral. The naval battle of Port Hudson was midway between the capture of New Orleans and the battle of Mobile Bay, about a year after New Orleans and about eighteen months before the battle of Mobile Bay, and it marks the beginning of the end of the Mississippi River fights—the battles that opened the great river from source to mouth and broke the backbone of the Rebellion.

Farragut had long been anxious to open the river with his fleet. In fact, he had fought his way up past Vicksburg not long after the capture of New Orleans, but his land forces were insufficient to hold any ground, and the attempt was given up at that time.

But a year later General Grant had risen, the star of the nation's hope, in the West—the greatest of our soldiers as Farragut was the greatest of our sailors; and at the time of which I speak Grant was advancing down the river accompanied by the fleet of Admiral Porter, to attack Vicksburg. Now was the time, Farragut thought (for he took the responsibility himself; the Navy Department had not the courage to order him to go),—now was the time, he thought, to dash up the river past Port Hudson and meet Grant and Porter at



Vicksburg, and then by patrol of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the Red River to Port Hudson, he would cut off the Confederate supply boats bound to Vicksburg and Port Hudson while the armies laid siege to both places.

So it was all arranged to be carried out by Farragut, and on the night of the 14th of March, 1863 (twenty-nine years ago, think of it, members of the Loyal Legion, with gray heads and large families),—it was on the night of the 14th of March, 1863, I say, that Farragut lay at dusk with his fleet just below Port Hudson on the west bank of the Mississippi, two hundred miles above New Orleans, ready to attack; while in the rear of Port Hudson, General Banks had marched a force intended to scare the garrison by making a show of a land attack. But they did n't scare a bit.

It was dark and calm. The air was heavy and moist. Beyond us stretched the black Mississippi, swirling down with its tremendous current under the dark cliffs a hundred feet high, where on the river's east bank the Confederate batteries lay ready to redden the night with their guns. Anchored near us were the *Essex* and six mortar schooners, ready at the signal for our advance to open fire on Port Hudson with mortars and long-range guns.

There we lay not far out of line, as the night fell. First the *Hartford*, with the gunboat *Albatross* lashed to her port side; then the *Richmond* with the *Genesee* alongside; then the *Monongahela* with the *Kineo*; and last, without a consort, the old frigate *Mississippi* with her big side-wheels, a grand old ship that had sailed in every clime of the world, commanded that night by the brave Admiral Melancthon Smith, who still lives, one of the most distinguished members of this Commandery.

Just after dark the *Hartford* ran up a red lantern, and then came the low click, click of the capstans as the anchors came up. It is as quiet as death. The men are standing at their stations at the guns; slowly the screws of the big ships revolve; slowly the fleet gets into line, lashed two and two, with the *Mississippi* last. And now they are off under full

steam through the dark night; every man waiting in his place to play his part when the enemy shall open fire. On, on they go, against the current under the frowning cliffs. Suddenly a rocket springs high above the river from the bank; and then there is a vivid flash of light, with a deafening roar of guns from the batteries ahead, with whistling of shot and bursting of shells over the *Hartford*. A shell comes tearing and whizzing through the hammock nettings and explodes over the *Albatross*. Quick the *Hartford* replies with her whole star-board battery, and as she steams ahead through the brilliant flashes of battle, the whole squadron follows, and battery after battery is ablaze. For a minute it is as light as day, but soon the smoke settles down round the ships, and shore and fleet are hidden. But the flashes of light pierce the smoke, and the roar of the guns stuns the ear. Up in the sky you can see the floating clouds that reflect the light from the battle and the glare from an immense fire that the Confederates have lighted on the low bank of the river opposite the batteries, to expose the line of the attacking fleet.

And now on every ship there are dead men stretched side by side and bloody decks and splinters and shattered boats. The guns jump in as they are fired, quick they are loaded and run out, and fired again. You do not hear the reports now. The ear in the roar of battle has lost the power to distinguish separate sounds. When a shell crashes through the ship, it is all over with some poor fellow, but most of the shot fly over us through the rigging, and every now and then a shower of splinters from aloft comes tumbling down on deck.

Fellow members of the Loyal Legion, you all know by experience that there is nothing that is rhetorical in a battle while it is going on. It is the recollection of it that becomes dramatic or poetical. A battle is a very practical piece of business, where every brave man tries to do his duty, wishing himself safe and sound with credit to himself, a whole skin, and honor and victory for his country. So let us stop the description of mere appearances and try to tell only what took place that was of importance in bringing about: first, the pas-

sage of Port Hudson by the *Hartford* and *Albatross* ; second, the loss of the grand old ship *Mississippi* ; and third, the failure of the *Richmond* and *Monongahela*, with their consorts, to follow Farragut.

Looking up the stream from the point where Farragut first encountered the fire from the bluffs that night, the river is straight for about a mile, with a high bluff of 80 feet on the east side and a low flat plain on the west side. At the end of this mile there is a sharp turn in the river to the west, almost a right angle. Along the bluff and beyond the turn in the river, the rebel batteries were scattered here and there for the whole distance. There were no guns on the east bank of the river ; on that side of the shore, the Confederates had piled up huge heaps of brushwood, and when the attack began these were set on fire, the light from the burning brush plainly revealing the forms of the ships to the Confederate gunners on the opposite bank. Of course the ships, having to meet the enemy's guns from the east side of the river, would only fire their starboard batteries. It was on this occasion that Farragut first carried out his idea of lashing a gunboat alongside a large ship, where the enemy's guns were only on one side. The gunboat, while thus receiving protection from her heavy consort, could also be of use in pulling the big ship through if her machinery should be disabled, and in case the larger ship should run aground, the gunboat's timely assistance might get her afloat. And, as a matter of fact, the *Monongahela* was actually saved from destruction that night by her consort, the *Kineo*. The little gunboat pulled the frigate off when she was hard and fast aground, right under the shore batteries. Farragut adopted this plan of lashing his vessels in pairs, at the battle of Mobile Bay, where the guns of Fort Morgan were also on the starboard hand of the fleet.

Along the east bluff of the river that we have been describing, the current sweeps down with a speed of about four miles an hour, and the channel is close under the bluff. At the turn in the river, just opposite the small hamlet of Port Hudson, a bad shoal runs out from the west shore, and it was there,

right under the last batteries, that the *Mississippi* met her doom.

It is plain to be seen that in an attempt to breast this swift running stream in the dark night, made darker still by the heavy smoke of one hundred and fifty guns, the most important man on a ship was the pilot. Every ship in the squadron carried two of these men—civilians, professional river pilots engaged by the Government at great cost. The pilot of the *Hartford* was a cool, experienced fellow. Farragut had a very high opinion of this man's skill and knowledge of the river, and he always said he believed it was his ability and coolness that kept the *Hartford* in the channel that night and pulled us through.

But let us return to the description of the events of the battle. It was twenty minutes after 11 P.M. when the first battery opened on the *Hartford*, and in ten minutes the whole fleet was engaged and pushing its way up the river. In the darkness and smoke, the ships soon lost sight of each other. The *Hartford* fought her way slowly but steadily on for an hour, keeping clear of the shore and not once touching bottom till she reached the turn in the river opposite the last battery. There her bow just grazed the shore. But her head was turned round, she was soon in deep water, and with a parting broadside at the Confederate battery, she bore up the river out of range. Farragut had accomplished the passage of Port Hudson.

But the old hero looked back in vain for his fleet to follow him. Far down the stream, he saw the fire of the shore batteries directed at a ship that was in flames. Now it was plain to him that the *Hartford* and *Albatross* had alone been successful in the battle; the rest of his fleet had either been beaten back or destroyed. What had been their fate, he could not hope to know till news came to him through the enemy, for the *Hartford* and *Albatross* were alone in the heart of the Confederacy, cut off from the brave fleet they had sailed with early that night, by the guns of Port Hudson.

I remember well that just as the ship came to an anchor



after the battle, we were sending up rockets from the poop deck, in the vain endeavor to open communication with the fleet below. The light fell on Farragut's face as he stood there looking anxiously down the river, with his arm on the shoulder of Lieutenant Loyall Farragut, his son, now a member of this Commandery, and I shall never forget the expression of anxiety and woe in the old hero's face. If he could only know what had happened to his fleet. But alas, he could not know, we were in the enemy's country, and with daylight the *Hartford* and *Albatross* must push on up the swift river, if Farragut would wrest any advantage for his cause and his country from that disastrous night.

Well, and what had happened to the rest of the fleet? It is soon told; it was short and sharp. At the bend in the river, a shot cut away one of the *Richmond's* steam pipes; she could no longer stem the river current, even with the aid of her consort, the *Genesee*; and she was compelled to turn and fight her way slowly back past the batteries. Just before the *Richmond* was disabled, Lieutenant Commander Cummings was mortally wounded, and on the passage back a shot swept down nearly a whole gun's crew of marines.

The *Monongahela* came close behind the *Richmond*, with the *Kineo*, both fighting gallantly; but in the dense smoke she ran aground under the batteries. Her captain (McKinstry) was wounded. It was hard work for the *Kineo* to pull the *Monongahela* off, but she did it. When they were afloat, it was found that the *Monongahela's* engines would not work, and there was nothing to be done but to fight their way back, which they finally succeeded in doing, all cut and torn.

Last of all came the *Mississippi*, commanded by our fellow member, Admiral Melancthon Smith. She had no consort. The old ship had to feel her way through a dense pall of smoke that had drifted along the surface of the river from above. She was struck many times, but gave it back to the Confederates with a will from her starboard guns. At last she had fought her way up to the fatal shoal at the turn where the *Monongahela* had grounded. On this shoal, right opposite the



heaviest rebel battery, the *Mississippi* ran hard and fast aground. She had no consort to pull her off. She fought her guns hard, and backed and twisted her brave old keel in her frantic efforts to get afloat, while the Confederate shot swept her decks and mowed down her men. It was no use ; Admiral Smith saw his ship was doomed. He must abandon her and set her on fire. Under the heavy fire from the shore, with men falling on every side, the wounded were embarked, and then all that were left of the ship's company were crowded into three boats, the only boats that had not been destroyed by the enemy's shot ; and thus they escaped under cover of the darkness down the river. Before abandoning the *Mississippi*, Admiral Smith had fired his ship in four places. Soon she was on fire from stem to stern. Fierce the flames ascended as her port guns went off. And then with a roar that was heard a hundred miles away, the *Mississippi* was no more.

## “IN THE COMPANY STREET.”

A Paper Read by CHARLES E. SPRAGUE, February 1, 1893.

THE true history of a nation is not merely the deeds of kings and ministers, of parliaments and princes, but the growth of the people; the annals of the brilliant few are not more important than the unrecorded movements of the obscure many. So in an army, there are other points of view than that of the commanding officer. Interesting as are our discussions of grand tactics and strategy, it may also be profitable to study the soldier himself, his thoughts and feelings, his home-life in the big family of the company and in the big neighborhood of the regiment; to turn our attention from the select circles of headquarters to the proletariat of the company street. In short, as has often been remarked, the need is for sketches of and by the obscure; and this I can help to supply, for in this brilliant organization I can lay claim to be conspicuous for my obscurity.

How some things appeared to a boy of nineteen, who lived in a company street in the Army of the Potomac, is gathered from his memory and from the letters he wrote to his mother.

One Monday late in November, over thirty years ago, our company came pulling ourselves along, at the finish of about fifteen miles of rather tough travel, and after dark turned into a piece of woods, stacked arms, and were told to “bivouac in rear of stacks, ready to march at daybreak.” Now it was a rule we soldiers learned to recognize, that if you camped down at night with strict injunctions to be ready to march on at daybreak, with advice from your officers that you’d better not waste any time in getting up comfortable shelter because

this was the most temporary kind of a halt, then for a certainty, if you followed this advice, you were going to be kept right in that bivouac long enough to repent not going to work at getting comfortably housed. So, after some experience, we never took any stock in assurances of brief stay; we went right to work at house building on the assumption that we should stay a month; if we marched next day no great harm was done, but if we stayed a week, we were well paid for our trouble.

The pine trees were thick around us that night, in the morning we could scarcely see the nearest regiment; but instead of marching at daybreak we stayed and stayed and went away and came back again and stayed again until the company street first traced by our stacks of arms seemed like a home, and till the thick woods had disappeared; every tree was cut down, first wastefully and extravagantly, at shoulder height, then down to a decent stump, then this stump was cut to the very quick, and finally we had no wood at all, having grubbed up the very roots. We stuck up our shelter tent that night and Eugene and Wilcox and I crawled under. The next morning after reveille, the first business was, of course, to settle bets on the sun. You see, in our company, when we got to camp after dark, we usually had a debate as to which way was north. Some of us were good at keeping in their heads the points of the compass in spite of the meanderings of Virginia paths; the rest of us thought we were equally smart, until the sun arose and we found our bets were lost. As I have said, we knew we should probably stay some time on account of the notification we had had, and sure enough symptoms of the kind soon broke out, some agreeable, such as the arrival of the sutler, others rather unpleasant, such as the posting of a regular camp guard.

We soon had enough to do in complying with all that the unceasing drum-beats suggested and compelled, but the improvement of our domestic architecture filled a large place in our thoughts. We built, tore down, and rebuilt on the self-same spot until our shanty seemed a part of ourselves, and of

all the homes that I have ever loved and left there is none which has left so deep an impression as that little hut of one room, built of pine logs, sticks, sods, mud, and canvas. It was built by days' work—a good many days,—and Eugene and I (the third man having fallen out sick) were its architects, builders, masons, carpenters, sanitary engineers, and walking delegates.

This residence of ours was situated in the State of Virginia. As nothing in that region is described by any closer geographical limit than a county, a Virginian would merely have said that it was "Stahf'd" County, but we could define our location more accurately. Our township was the Fifth Army Corps; our village was the Third Brigade, First Division; our ward was the 44th N. Y.; and our street was Company E. As it turned out we were not far from Falmouth and near the railroad at a point which thenceforward, and possibly to this day, became known as "Stoneman's Switch." Stafford County never had so large a population up to the night we arrived, and probably never will have again. In our regiment they were not so strenuous for uniformity of architecture as in some commands, and allowed scope for individuality; as long as the line of front doors was pretty straight down the company streets, we could build our shanties of size and style to suit our tastes. Ours in its final form was about as follows: There was first, a cellar dug the full size of the ground plan, about two feet deep. Next came a wall of split pine logs, resting on the ground and held up by stakes, carrying up the cellar wall to a height of five feet in all. Now, the roof was of canvas, made of several of the little shelter tents, fastened together and stretched over a ridge-pole, which was supported by two stout uprights in front and rear. The front or door was also of canvas until we got our chimney built later on. Our next step was to caulk our wall with mud. Glorious Virginia mud! The one product of which there was always enough. Plastic as butter, but tough as spruce gum when dried: for architectural purposes, admirable; for pedestrian uses, vile. We plastered our wall pretty tightly with this natural stucco, and

banked up the lower edge. We ditched around our house, and conducted the waters into the company gutter. Our bed, which comprised all our furniture, being also chair, sofa, and table, was our next care. It was a spring bed. We split long straight pine saplings and laid them crosswise of the shanty on supports which held them about level with the surface of the ground. The bed was about three feet wide. Eugene and I were both slender. When sitting on the edge of the bed our feet rested against the front wall of our mansion. Here we talked; here we smoked; here we read; in pleasant weather, with our front canvas fastened back, we conversed with our neighbors, discussing every subject under heaven; and here we sat, Eugene and I, by our own fireside after the chimney was built.

Our chimney was a picturesque structure of sods. The mortar which held together these substitutes for brick was the aforesaid mud. An open fireplace faced the right-hand man of the two inmates who sat on the bed, and that man did the cooking from that position. Our chimney was a large one, covering more than half the front of the house and forming our front wall. A wooden mantel defined the top of the fireplace. Above this the chimney tapered somewhat and ended in a barrel. Some of our comrades had double-barrelled chimneys, but we found it hard enough to steal one barrel at a time to supply those which caught fire; total loss; no insurance.

This was our home in the company street, as finished, but its evolution was gradual. It began as a mere tent; it ended in a house. To what further flights of architecture we might have gone, cannot be known.

Our first exodus was to Fredericksburg. We had begun to take root a little in our company street; the trees were pretty well thinned out, the street itself was graded and drained, our drill was regained, and it was evident we were now in camp. A sure sign was the fact that there was time to waste in court-martials, for the adjutant read us, at day parade, long stories of certain soldiers, who had "on or about"



such a time, "at or near" such a place, done or said something, or "words to that effect."

But one Thursday, December 11th, we broke camp, never again, we supposed, to see the old street. The old shanty was dismantled to the music of that long and solemn call which every soldier knew as "Strike tents." First the brigade bugler had given it to us, after twice repeating a preface, or heading as it were, to his proclamation, which to every Third Brigade man seemed to chant the name of our old commander thus:

Dan! Dan! Dan! Butterfield! Butterfield!

The angel Gabriel in his musical capacity is always associated with General Butterfield in the mind of any soldier of our brigade. If the bugler was not at hand, "Dan" could even sound the call himself and blow his own trumpet.

Mike, the regimental bugler, next lifts his old battered copper horn to his good-natured mouth, and easy as a bird out floats his little song. His preliminary call was different and addressed to the 44th alone. The buglers of the other regiments had each sounded his own tune, and about the same moment was ringing through the whole brigade the long-drawn exhortation,

Come! Come! Come! Come!

Strike your tents! Strike your tents! Strike your tents! Strike your tents!

Down came the ponchos, and the camp looked like the skeleton of itself. We used to call our pieces of shelter-tent "ponchos," through some confusion of terms, for really the poncho was a rubber thing with a slit to put your head through. Our first sergeant had made us pack up everything beforehand, and now we sat around on our worldly possessions having destroyed what we could not carry, for we never expected to see that camp again. Pat Riley, our next neighbor in the street, threw back his head and sang some ancient Irish lays in a voice up near his skull, with never a pause till the end, when his spare wind blew itself off like that of a bagpipe. Pat, being

of bardic ancestry, was doubtless intoning a war-song, but it was unpleasantly like a dirge and did not inspirit us, except to throw things at Pat. The day was well advanced when we finally got the assembly, which we welcomed with a shout, for it meant doing something and not waiting in suspense. If I wanted to take all the spunk out of a lot of soldiers, I should get them all ready to go somewhere, or do something, and then—not do it. We were marched down in sight of Fredericksburg and spent two days as lookers-on, watching the explosive puffs of smoke on both sides of the river. At night we retired to the woods to sleep, regretting the old camp we had just left, and the spare blankets that were there. Saturday afternoon came a change. Our division headed for the pontoons and we knew where we were going, for we had seen a good many cross but few come back. One of the first who came back, a man from a new regiment, was well escorted. He was supported by a comrade on each side and another behind carried guns and knapsacks. The whole group of four must have gone, not wishing to confuse their company by counting off anew. The wounded man's injury was in one of his fingers. Our company kept straight on, though, and not a man dropped out. After getting through the town, Mike's bugle sounded "Lie down," and here I came to grief. The butt of my gun slipped, and the whole lock went into a puddle and was covered with wet mud. I felt sure that I could not fire it, and I did not want a gun that would not shoot. My gun was very bright outside and in; so elegant looking, that I hoped to get the vacant sergeancy soon on the strength of its exquisite polish. Pretty soon we went ahead, and I was on the lookout for another weapon. I found one alongside of a soldier among some piled timber. He looked and acted as if he needed some quinine and his gun was n't the kind that could bring promotion, but I took it from him and went on. I might just as well have had the old rifle into whose surface so much rubbing had gone, for firstly, we had no chance to shoot at all, merely excellent facilities to be shot at; secondly, when I investigated his, I found a cartridge in it bottom side up. Finally, the

owner of the gun had cut his initials, which were T. M., on the left side of the stock,—a most flagrant crime against military propriety. I had afterwards to explain away those deeply cut letters, to the first sergeant, to the captain, to the adjutant, to the officer of the day, to the major, and to the colonel, each in turn ; and at last when Inspector-General Webb inspected us in person, I caught it again. By this time, I had become a sergeant, in spite of the musket, which I had scoured up to a pretty good shine, but the carving was there still. Of course I was out in front, in plain sight, little finger on the seam of the pantaloons, body erect on the hips, inclining a little forward, eyes gazing into futurity with a stony stare. Expressionless as I made my face, there must have been guilt in it. I thought, "Will he see it?" (If it were now, I should have said, "Will he get onto it?" but in those days our language was more correct.) See it? Get onto it? General Webb looked right through that gun stock and saw the letters on the opposite side. I stood at "inspection arms." He turned the musket right over, read T. M.'s autograph, looked through my eyes into my back hair, and proceeded to scrutinize every inch of the piece, concluding by jingling the rammer up and down and trying to soil his glove with the end of it, while I was wondering how soon I should be the subject of the adjutant's recital—"said Sergeant Sprague, wilfully, maliciously at or near Falmouth, Va., on or about—letters T. M. or words to that effect," and ending up with "Fort Wool, Rip Raps, Hampton Roads, Virginia." But probably there was no ring of rust on the glove. There was a rusty ring in his voice though when he burst forth—"Sergeant, what do you mean by cutting your name on your rifle?" I rattled off my now well learned explanation: "Did not cut it, sir ; not my name, sir ; could not fire my rifle at Fredericksburg, sir ; dropped it, and picked up this one, sir." Then he threw it into my hand so that it stung, with the advice, in a much lower tone, "Swop again, sergeant." He did n't touch another gun in our company—no other man had guilt in his eye.

But I am wandering. We got over the broken ground and

out into a field in front of the enemy or of a place where sheet lightning seemed to be playing. On we went, right towards that lightning. Pat Riley came to the front, he jumped about six feet forward and swung his rifle circularly above his head, dropping in a moment all the manual that had been drilled into him, and reverting to ancestral instincts. I think we were now beyond the point where there was any distinction between courage and cowardice; we were thoroughly insane and would have run right into that sheet lightning if little Major Knox had let us. But instead, he wheeled the battalion to the right. Why, I don't know, but I distinctly remember that our regiment wheeled in line of battle at double-quick. I remember how, in my delirium, with all the pedantry of a corporal who has studied the tactics and knows it all, I said to myself, "There's no such thing in Casay as 'Battalion, right wheel.' It ought to have been, 'Change direction to the right.'"

It was not more than ten minutes from the time I swopped guns, when we were lying behind a hill and Captain Larrabee of Company B was saying in his cheery voice, "Major, these two left companies are under an enfilading fire." Major Knox replied, "Move them more to the right." Then, as I still had a touch of insanity, I said to myself: "Enfilading. Never heard that word pronounced before, though I have read it all my life. Now, first time I hear it, I am enfiladed. Practical example, like Squeers's teaching at Dotheboys Hall."

Now we were in a queer box, but we did not know it till morning. We slept a little during the night, not knowing but that we were in a very desirable location. It turned out at sunrise that we were just barely hidden from the rebels, who could just graze the air a few feet above us. It was possible to get your head blown off by standing up; it was possible to remain alive by close contact with the earth. We chose to spend a very quiet Sunday. Twenty-four hours we lay there until it was as dark as it had been when we came. Then we put our tin cups in our haversacks, and fixed everything so it would not rattle. We departed very unostentatiously, not with the pride, pomp, and circumstance with which we came

there Saturday afternoon. That night we slept on the sidewalk of Fredericksburg; the next night, oh, most joyful change, we went to bed in a house. The house had been ventilated with some cannon balls, but some of the roof was there still and it could not be denied that we were sleeping in a house. It did not quite meet our anticipations, but it sounded well. At midnight we were waked up again, and very quietly taken out of the town to a place very much like our Sunday's lodging, relieving the 66th N. Y. Before daylight, we crept back to the town even more quietly, and in the grey of the morning, recrossed the pontoons with the usual cold rain in our faces. Although it seemed too good to be true, we were headed for the old camp—home again. We prodigal sons could now appreciate the comforts of a home, and were willing to dispense with the veal cutlets.

We had picked up a good deal of plunder at Fredericksburg, but all I had brought back was a bad cough. Eugene and I went into the house-building again. We had our logs cut and in position, when about the last day of the year 1862, there was another pulling up of stakes—no, we did n't pull up many stakes this time. We may come back, thought we, or else some other fellow may, and we'll leave these sticks and things as they are. Our departure this time was part of a movement I never have seen mentioned in any history. We marched up the river about fifteen miles and camped in the snow, spending New Year's Day in a bitterly cold place, and then tramped back again. The manœuvre of getting back to the old camp was one we could now perform without tunes or motions. Again, after this interruption, we settled down to our regular professional work as architects.

Our next trip was the famous "stick-in-the-mud," that mixture of mud, misery, pack-mules, and profanity, where wretchedness was carried to such a point that it became overwhelmingly funny. This time we left all standing and soon came back to find several inches of water in the cellar of our shanty. Things were soon got to rights, however, and our dwelling made more comfortable than before. The street was



jolly, gossipy, buzzing with jokes, full of rumors readily believed. Boxes from the north, letters from home, soft bread, and furloughs for a favored few brightened us up, and before we knew it we felt cheery and hopeful; it was no longer fashionable to growl. Fashion had a good deal to do with the prevailing tone of the street; we were bullish or bearish like other streets. After Antietam, the correct thing was to say, "Well, you just let me get out of here once and you 'll never see me a soldier again." After we had left Warrenton, this change to the "bold, bad man" style, "Oh, I'm so used to this sort of thing, that Uncle Sam can't spare me; if I felt like it, I could lick anything." After Fredericksburg, "I'm a sad-eyed, unappreciated martyr." Now, a few weeks after the mud campaign, optimism was in the ascendant again, especially after we found that Joe Hooker was working for us soldiers, was thinking of us. That is what the soldier appreciated—not so much what was done for him, as the fact that some one was interested in him, was sympathizing with him. So our sullenness disappeared and Joe Hooker might have quoted the proverb, "Soft bread turneth away wrath." As it was understood that a clean and handsome camp was a credential for furloughs, we policed our street so that you would have thought Tom Brennan expected a Tammany parade to pass that way. Cleanliness, in camp, was 'way ahead of godliness. The regiment had a pretty good guard-house and resolved to erect a creditable church. I suppose the idea was, instead of enlarging the guard-house, to cut off its supply of material. This was a grand lark for some of the boys, going off with the quartermaster's mules into the thick woods and hauling logs for the church. Then we started another enterprise; the boss flag-staff of the Army of the Potomac. There was a tall tree standing right on the parade ground; some of our best axemen went out and cut another pine, the tallest and straightest they could find. This was trimmed down to a mast, dragged in to camp, fitted with halliards, hoisted up through the branches of the standing tree, lashed to its top; then its branches were cut away, leaving a flag-staff of two lengths, the

lower part rooted in the ground. Our zouave uniforms were sent down from Washington where they had been stored for many months, and with white leggings and gloves, dress parade became a thing of beauty. These measures restored our spirits, and the company street became cheery, chatty, and chaffy.

We had only one heavy snowstorm that I remember. Just at reveille one morning in February, I opened my eyes upon a cone-shaped mound of white snow in our fire-place, tall and slender, extending upward till its apex was invisible. At the same instant I became conscious that fine snow was sifting through the cracks, and that Eugene would soon be snowed under. Just then, boom went a cannon somewhere in the distance, and boom, boom, was repeated in a lively cannonade.

This was disgusting. To get up in a snowstorm was bad enough, but here was somebody inconsiderate enough to start a fight in such uncomfortable weather, and doubtless the Fifth Corps would be turned out in a few minutes. The language used up and down our company street did not at all agree in temperature with the snow. In a minute, some fellow who was an expert on the almanac, shouted out, "Washington's birthday." What a groan of relief echoed along the street when we remembered that it was February 22d. If it had been in these latter days, we should have enquired what was the matter with Washington, and explained who he was; but in those times, we merely said, "Bully for George," and "How are you, Washington?" These two formulas, together with "big thing," and "can't see it," were about the only witticisms we knew in 1863.

We did have a fight before that snow vanished, but it was with snowballs, and the 17th New York was the enemy.

So the days passed till the middle of April, when it was evident that something was going to happen. Our fancy uniforms were sent away and we lightened in advance the loads we were to carry through the summer. About two weeks were passed in suspense, losing something of the good feeling which had been so skilfully cultivated. Then off to Chancellorsville, making the fourth time we had assembled in the com-

pany street for a final departure, to the sound of the "Dan Butterfield" bugle. Each time, the line in front of the first sergeant had shortened by a few miles, and we knew that if we ever fell in on that ground again, more of us would be absent. As we stood in line in marching order, we were a fair specimen of an American regiment. We stood about three hundred, rank and file. Few regiments had anything like the nominal strength which a regiment should have. We were a very sun-burned, hearty-looking set of fellows; we looked as if we could eat a square meal whenever we got one. In fact, we were a set of boys. The ages of our company averaged twenty-four, and probably there were more men about twenty-two than of any other age. We were not punctilious about the regulations as to dress. Our regimental uniforms of semi-zouave pattern had been turned in, and we had frock-coats, blouses, or jackets, just as it happened—anything blue would do. In hats and caps there was also much variety; the hideous regular army cloth cap, with slanting peak, which some turned up and some turned down—each way it looked worse; or the more nobby French shape, with straight visor; or the McClellan cap, with top falling forward,—these had been sent on from home or purchased when on furlough; or the army black felt, which was generally worn with the crown depressed in the centre; or other varieties of black soft hats, which were worn in spite of regulations. But every one had on his cap or hat a red Maltese cross, the badge of our division. Some had leggings, some had not; some old hands were in favor of stuffing the trousers into the stockings and tying them there with strings. The broad shoes furnished by the Government and usually called "gunboats" were the most fashionable foot wear; this was a part of the uniform which private enterprise did not much improve on. Only one thing about our get-up would have pleased a military critic,—our guns were clean and bright.

We were well keyed up to do anything Hooker asked, and I think that up to the very last of that discouraging campaign we were ready to make tremendous efforts for him. But the coming home was the worst yet. We had been the rear-guard

as usual, and in the rain as usual ; we had struggled through a wilderness and waded knee-deep in mud ; and when we had crossed the pontoons again, all semblance of discipline seemed suspended and the only thing was to get back to the old camp anyhow. Right glad we were to find ourselves there again. It was wisdom to let us rally on the old camp ; in no other way could we so readily have been brought back to our accustomed condition. I find that I wrote this to my mother :

"We got back to the old camp, Wednesday, soaked with mud and rain. We had not enough ponchos to cover our foundations, as we only carried one apiece and the extra ones we had left had been taken by the contractor for paper rags. So we had to huddle together about twice the number in the miserable wet holes. We were at about the lowest depth of misery and demoralization, which was not alleviated by being ordered to be ready to march next afternoon. But on Friday morning we were ordered to commence policing the street and make other preparations for a stay. This, with the more favorable news we received and a ration of soft bread, got us into better spirits, and now (Sunday) we are in the old routine of camp duty."

It began to seem as though that old camp ground was our predestined habitat for all time. It was impossible for us to stay away, and each attempt had resulted in disaster. It was an unlucky place to start from evidently. Therefore our next campaign must start from somewhere else. Whether this was the line of argument or not, we finally broke up the old camp without waiting for the campaign to open. The brigade fell in in the old company street and this was, actually, the last time. We marched off to a new camp-ground and made preparations enough to stay there several years. As a result, we soon left it and never saw it again.

I have never talked about the company street and about the best way to fix up a shanty with but one major-general,—until to-night. I had some conversation on the subject with the corps commander on the last day I revisited the old camp. Some half-dozen of our company asked permission to go over to the old ground and bring away some of the bric-a-brac left behind, and I was with them. We were tramping cheerily

across the country (I think we had a pass to go through the picket line) and crossed a road just as the General was riding by, accompanied by an officer and followed by a headquarters' wagon. He reined up and evidently had something to say. "Who is in command of these men?" I modestly replied that "I was, sir," and explained that our captain had permitted us to go back to get some boards and things. "Boards and things! a soldier has no business to have anything but what he can carry on his back." I involuntarily rolled my eyes to the left, where the big headquarters wagon had halted; perhaps this hint that soldiers of high degree need not carry all their possessions on their backs, hurt General Meade's feelings, for he rode on with a "Humph!" Evidently General Meade did not agree with General Hooker's ideas as to the treatment of the soldiers. Probably he thought that from a dead level of discomfort we could easier bear any additional suffering, but that was not Hooker's theory. He believed in compensation, and thought the higher the pendulum swung on one side, the higher it would go on the other; that a soldier would, and could, endure more when called upon, if he had been made contented and comfortable up to that time.

As I seldom have a chance to address an audience mostly of major-generals, I will take the opportunity to give them some advice on the conduct of the next war.

Tho' the soldier's attached to his hard-tack,  
He could eat Delmonico's bread;  
Tho' he sleeps on the ground when he has to,  
Don't think he despises a bed.

We settled it down by the camp-fire,  
As a principle well understood:  
For men who are willing to face the worst,  
The best is n't any too good.

So, General, up at headquarters,  
Bear in mind the advice I repeat:  
Take good care of the man that carries the gun,  
And lives in the company street.



## LINCOLN AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

A Paper Read by Major ALEXANDER K. MCCLURE, April 6, 1893.

THE supreme law makes the President the Commander-in-chief of the military and naval forces of the nation. This is a necessity in all well-regulated governments, as the sovereign or highest civil ruler must have supreme command of the forces of the country for the public defense. During the revolutionary war the universal confidence that General Washington inspired made him practically the supreme director of our military operations. The supreme civil authority then was the Colonial Congress, and no one of that body could assume this high prerogative. During the war of 1812, with England, I find no instance in which President Madison exercised any authority in the direction of campaigns as Commander-in-chief of the army. There was no formal Commander-in-chief. Major-General Dearborn, the ranking major-general, was assigned as acting Commander-in-chief, although retained in active command in the Northern district. The President was conferred with very freely as to military movements, but I do not find any instance in which he assumed the responsibility of issuing orders for military movements in the field. The Mexican war presents a somewhat different phase of history. President Polk assumed the responsibility as Commander-in-chief by ordering General Taylor to march from the Nueces to the Rio Grande and thus precipitated the Mexican war without either the authority or knowledge of Congress; and later in the war, when it became necessary to enlarge the army to make an aggressive campaign on the city of Mexico, General Scott was summoned by the President to

propose a plan of campaign that he should command in person. He did so, and, after its approval by the President, the troops were provided and General Scott was permitted to prosecute the campaign from Vera Cruz to the Mexican capital, without interference by orders from Washington.

When civil war confronted us in 1861, General Scott was the hero of two wars and recognized by the country and the world as the great captain of the age. Although a son of Virginia he was thoroughly loyal to the Government and all turned to him as the bulwark of safety for our threatened country. He was believed to be the most accomplished general then living, and President Lincoln, the Cabinet, and the country had absolute faith in his ability to discharge the duties of Commander-in-chief, even in the extreme and appalling necessities of civil war, with consummate skill and success. It was not until active, practical operations had to be commenced for the protection of the capital and for the defense of the Government, that those closest to General Scott learned the sad lesson of his utter incompetency for the new duties forced upon him. He had entirely outlived his usefulness. He had never commanded over 12,000 men in all his lustrous record, and the magnitude of our civil war, coming upon him when the infirmities of age enfeebled him mentally and physically, made him wholly unequal to the task. President Lincoln, always unobtrusive when he could be so consistent with his sense of duty, deferred to General Scott and his military associates. He had no plan of campaign ; he sought only to attain peace with the least bloodshed and disturbance.

The first star that shed its lustre on the Union arms was that of General McClellan, the young Napoleon of the West, whose victories in Western Virginia made his name a household word. He was the first to propose a comprehensive plan for aggressive movements against the rebellion, and coming from one of the youngest soldiers of the army it is not surprising that General Scott, with his sensitiveness as to advice from those of less experience, rejected it and presented a comprehensive plan of his own, then known as the "Anaconda"

method of crushing the rebellion. In this dispute Lincoln took no part and probably gave little attention to it. He then clung to the hope that no such general military movements might be necessary to attain peace. His belief was that shared by most of the prominent men of the Cabinet, that a successful battle and the capture of Richmond would mean peace. He had no occasion, therefore, to exercise his authority as Commander-in-chief beyond conferring with General Scott and the Secretary of War. Had he understood the issue then as he understood it a year or more later, I hazard little in saying that the first battle of Bull Run would have been differently fought and with almost a reasonable certainty of the defeat of the insurgents. The care with which he watched the diffusion of military forces and the keen sagacity and tireless interest he ever manifested in the concentration of our military forces in every campaign, forbid the assumption that had he understood the war then as he soon learned to understand it, there could have been a division of the Union forces in the Bull Run campaign to fight the united forces of the enemy. General McDowell fought the battle of Bull Run with 17,676 effective men and twenty-four guns, when he should have had some 15,000 additional from General Patterson's command and from 15,000 to 20,000 of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps then fully organized and ready for the field. I feel quite sure that had Lincoln then assumed the authority as Commander-in-chief that he ever after maintained until Grant became Lieutenant-General, McDowell would have commanded fully 50,000 men at Bull Run and would have overwhelmed the enemy and marched into Richmond. It is possible, indeed quite probable, that such an achievement would have ended the war, but it was not to be. Slavery, the author of the war, would have survived such a peace and the great conflict of thirty years ago would have been handed down to another generation.

Lincoln was quickened to the exercise of his full authority as Commander-in-chief by the multiplied misfortunes of his generals. He accepted as commanders the men in the army most conspicuous in military service, and it was one of the sad-

dest lessons of the war that not one of the commanders then prominent before the country and most trusted, became chieftains as the conflict progressed. The contrast between the Union and the Confederate commanders is indeed painful. The Confederate officers who started out as military leaders in the beginning of the war, as a rule were its chieftains at the close. The Johnsons, Cooper, Lee, Beauregard, Jackson, Longstreet, Hill, Kirby Smith, Early, Bragg, Hood, Fitz Hugh Lee, Stuart, and others either fell in the flame of battle leading high commands, or emerged from the war with the highest distinction. On the other side, not one of the men who came out of the war with the grateful plaudits of the country as chieftains of the Union was known to military fame when Sumter was fired upon. One by one Lincoln's commanders fell by the wayside and he was constantly perplexed with the sense of the fearful responsibility he was compelled to assume in the assignment of commanders to the different armies. This necessity naturally called for the employment of his supreme powers and compelled him to exercise the soundest discretion time and again, as failure followed failure in his great work of overthrowing the rebellion. Lincoln had learned the painful lesson of Scott's inability to perform the duties expected of him by the country, and on the 29th of June, 1861, he called the first council of war that embraced his Cabinet, Scott, and other military men. It was there that McDowell's plan for the advance on Manassas was decided upon. Lincoln did not advise but assented to it, and Scott gave a reluctant assent only when he learned that it was a public necessity for the army to advance, as the term of the three-months men would soon expire. The history of that battle is known in all its details to this intelligent audience of experienced military men.

It is not surprising that a man of Lincoln's sagacity and trained practical methods should consider his responsibility as Commander-in-chief after the defeat of Bull Run. He felt that he had no one to whom he could turn for counsel that he could implicitly accept, and he was equal to the occasion. On the night after the battle of Bull Run Lincoln sought no sleep,

but after gathering all the information that he could as to the situation, he devoted the hours of early morning to formulating a plan of military operations, and it is marvellous how closely that programme was followed in the long and bloody years through which the war was fought to its consummation. This was Lincoln's first distinct assumption of the duties of Commander-in-chief. He wrote out in pencil, with his own hand, memoranda directing that a blockade should be made effective as soon as possible; that the volunteer forces at Fortress Monroe be constantly drilled and disciplined; that Baltimore should be held with a firm hand; that Patterson's forces be strengthened and made secure in their position; that the forces of West Virginia continue to act under orders from McClellan; that General Fremont should push forward his work in the West, and especially in Missouri; that the Army of the Potomac should be reorganized as rapidly as possible on Arlington Heights; and that new volunteers should be brought forward speedily into camps for instruction. This memorandum bears date July 23, 1861, and on the 27th of July he added to it that, when the foregoing should have been substantially attended to, Manassas Junction and Strausburg should be seized and permanently held with an open line from Harper's Ferry to Strausburg, and a joint movement from Cairo on Memphis and from Cincinnati on East Tennessee should be promptly organized. This was Mr. Lincoln's first acceptance of the necessity that called him to exercise his duties as Commander-in-chief, and it will be observed that his plan of campaign fully comprehended the situation and the military necessities which arose thereafter.

The mental and physical feebleness of Scott, together with the infirmities of temper which age and disease had logically wrought, made it a necessity to have a new commander for the army. McClellan was then the only one who came with achievement to enforce his title to the general command, and he was called to Washington as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Volunteers were offered in abundance, and the one man of any country best fitted for the organization of a



great army was fortunately there to organize the army that was ever undaunted by defeat and that in the end received the sword of Lee at Appomattox. There was early friction between Scott and McClellan, and all the kind offices of Lincoln failed to soothe the old veteran or to make the young commander submissive to the alleged whims of his superior. It became a supreme necessity to have Scott retired, and it was finally accomplished after much effort, but fortunately it has no detailed record in the annals of the country. The true story of Scott's retirement from the command of the army could have been written by but three men, viz: Lincoln, Cameron, and Assistant Secretary Thomas A. Scott. They have all joined the veteran soldier in the ranks of the great majority beyond, and none will ever write the chapter on the change of the military Commander-in-chief in 1861.

From the time that Lincoln called McClellan to Washington he tenaciously exercised his high prerogatives as Commander-in-chief of the army and navy until the 8th of March, 1864, when he handed to General Grant his commission as Lieutenant-General; and he was very often in conflict with his department commanders as to their operations or failure to prosecute them. His first serious trial arose with General McClellan in the fall of 1861, and that conflict was never entirely closed until McClellan was finally relieved from the command of his army after the battle of Antietam in the fall of 1862. The late fall months of 1861 were peculiarly favorable for military operations and the Administration and the entire country became impatient to have the army advance. Just when Lincoln expected a movement toward Manassas, McClellan became seriously ill and continued so for several weeks; and after his recovery, obstacles seemed to multiply each day until the aggressive movement was universally commanded. On the 1st of December, 1861, Lincoln requested of McClellan a plan of campaign in which he asked how soon the army could be moved and how many men would be required to make the advance direct to Richmond. To this McClellan replied that he could move from the 15th to the 25th, and sug-

gested that he had another plan of campaign soon to present to the President. During McClellan's illness Lincoln assumed the responsibility of summoning Generals McDowell and Franklin in conference with him as to the movements of the army, and on the 27th of January, without consulting with any of the commanders, or even the Cabinet, he issued "General War Order No. 1," directing that on the 22d of February there should be a general movement of the land and naval forces against the insurgents, of the Army of Fortress Monroe, the Army of the Potomac, the Army of Western Virginia, the Army of Kentucky, the Army and flotilla of Cairo and the naval forces from the Gulf of Mexico. That was followed four days later by a special order from the President to General McClellan, directing him that all the disposable forces of the Army of the Potomac, after providing for the defense of Washington, be moved immediately upon Manassas Junction; that all details be in the discretion of McClellan, and the movement was to begin on the 22d of February. This was a direct order to McClellan; but believing as he did that it was not a wise one, he urged his objections earnestly upon the President. It was to those objections that Lincoln wrote a somewhat celebrated letter to McClellan, in which he so tersely but suggestively discussed the difference between the Peninsula campaign, then preferred by McClellan, and the movement upon Manassas. Lincoln did not arbitrarily command; he sought to be convinced as to whether he was right or wrong, and all who knew him would bear testimony to the fact that no public man was more easily approached when his own convictions were to be questioned by sincere, intelligent men. These are his incisive inquiries to McClellan:

Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of time and money than mine?

Wherein is a victory more certain by your plan than mine?

Wherein is a victory more valuable by your plan than mine?

In fact would it not be less valuable in this, that it would

break no great line of the enemy's connections while mine would?

In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?

I cite these inquiries of Lincoln, not to show that he was either right or wrong in his judgment, but to convey a just appreciation of Lincoln's careful study of the military situation at that early period of the war; his intelligent knowledge of the proposed results of campaigns, and his entire willingness to gain the best information to revise his judgment if in error. McClellan was so tenacious as to the correctness of his Peninsula campaign that Lincoln, after much deliberation, reluctantly yielded his convictions, and from the day that he did so he certainly sought in every way that he could, consistently with the safety of the capital, to aid McClellan in his movement. About this time Lincoln was much perplexed by another grave dispute with McClellan. Lincoln believed that it would be wise to organize the Army of the Potomac into army corps with responsible commanders, while McClellan was unwilling to accept that method of organization, for reasons which need not here be discussed. The order of the President for the movement of the armies on the 22d of February was not obeyed, and on the 8th of March, Lincoln assumed the responsibility of issuing an order to McClellan to divide the Army of the Potomac into four army corps to be commanded by McDowell, Sumner, Heintzelman, and Keyes, with a reserve force for the defense of Washington, under command of Wadsworth. A fifth corps was also ordered to be formed, with Banks as commander. On the same day he issued "President General Order No. 3," directing that no change of base of operations of the Army of the Potomac should be made without leaving for Washington defenses a sufficient force to make the capital entirely secure.

This order went to the very marrow of what is yet an unsettled dispute between the friends of Lincoln and of McClellan, but this is not the occasion to discuss the merits of that controversy. It necessarily withheld from direct co-oper-

ation with McClellan, a considerable portion of the army that could have been utilized in the effort to capture Richmond if it had been deemed safe to uncover Washington. With the details of that memorable and heroic campaign this audience is thoroughly familiar. McClellan advanced upon Manassas only to find it abandoned by the enemy. A council of war was held at McClellan's quarters, Fairfax Court-House, on the 13th of March, at which it was decided to proceed against Richmond by the Peninsula. The only diversity of sentiment at that council was as to whether 25,000 or 40,000 men should be detached for the defense at Washington; Keyes, Heintzelman, and McDowell favoring the smaller number, and Sumner the larger number. I should here note a circumstance that I think is not generally understood. On the 11th of March, when McClellan was advancing with his army on Manassas, Lincoln issued an order practically removing him from the office of Commander-in-chief by limiting his command to only the Army of the Potomac operating with him against Richmond. This order has been variously discussed from the different standpoints held by the friends of Lincoln and McClellan, and with the merits of the controversy I do not propose to deal. I want to say, however, that those who assume that Lincoln limited McClellan's command because of any personal prejudice against him are in error. He appointed no successor as Commander-in-chief, but obviously left the place open for him who should win it. It is evident that his difficulties with McClellan about advancing upon Richmond, and about the organization of his army, had somewhat impaired Lincoln's confidence in McClellan as Commander-in-chief, but I speak advisedly when I say that he sincerely hoped that McClellan would succeed in his Richmond campaign by the capture of the Confederate capital, and thus prove his right to be restored as Commander-in-chief. I know that Lincoln cherished that hope and meant that the captor of Richmond should be made the Commander-in-chief of the army. Nor is this statement without strong corroboration from circumstance. The position of Commander-in-chief was not filled by Lincoln until



precisely four months after McClellan had been relieved from it, namely, on the 11th of August, 1862, and just four days after McClellan's letter to the President, written at Harrison's Landing, severely criticising not only the military, but the political policy of the Administration.

That was a fateful letter for McClellan. It did not resolve Lincoln against the further support of McClellan, nor do I believe that it seriously prejudiced McClellan in Lincoln's estimation, as was shown by his restoration of McClellan to command after Pope's defeat soon thereafter, but it so thoroughly defined partisan lines between McClellan and the supporters of the Administration, that when Lincoln called McClellan to the command of the defenses of Washington he had to do it against the united vote of his Cabinet, and against the protests of almost, if not quite, a united party in Congress and in the country. However earnestly Lincoln may have desired to support McClellan thereafter, he was greatly weakened in his ability to do so. His letters to McClellan during the Peninsula campaign are an interesting study. All of them are singularly generous and never offensive, and exhibit the sincerest desire of the President to render McClellan every support possible without exposing Washington to reasonable peril of capture. Only a week before this political letter was written, McClellan had addressed Stanton a long letter, in which he said: "If I save this army now I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other persons in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army." That McClellan, like Lincoln, did everything and said everything with the most patriotic purposes, and with intended loyalty to every duty, I do not doubt, but the issue remains now nearly a generation after the dispute began, and is likely to continue throughout all the pages of future history.

Four days after the Harrison Landing letter was delivered to the President, Halleck was appointed Commander-in-chief. The office remained vacant precisely four months, during which time there never was a doubt that Halleck would be called to the position unless McClellan should be restored. Soon after



Lincoln returned from his visit to McClellan on the Peninsula, at which time McClellan's letter was delivered in person to Lincoln, Halleck urged the removal of McClellan from command, but Lincoln overruled him, and instead of ordering the Army of the Peninsula back to the support of Pope, McClellan was ordered to come with his forces. How McClellan ceased to have a command when his army was brought within the jurisdiction of General Pope is well understood by this assembly. Pope was defeated and routed and driven back into the entrenchments of Washington. In this emergency Lincoln braved the unanimous hostility of his Cabinet and all his political friends by calling upon McClellan in person in Washington and asking him to take command of the defenses of the capital, which practically gave him command of the entire army while it was defending Washington. It was not a difficult matter to defend the capital with the complete system of entrenchments constructed by McClellan. There were a score of generals in the army who could have done that, but what the army needed most of all was reorganization. It was broken, dispirited, almost hopeless, and Lincoln knew that no man approached McClellan as a military organizer. To use his own language on the occasion, as quoted by Mr. Hay in his diary: "There is no one in the army who can command these fortifications and lick these troops of ours into shape half as well as he [McClellan] can." In this severe trial Lincoln was not forgetful of his duties of Commander-in-chief. On the 3d of September, the day after assigning McClellan to the command of the defenses of Washington, he issued an order to General-in-chief Halleck, directing him to proceed with all possible dispatch to organize an army for active operations to take the field against the enemy. The Antietam campaign logically followed as Lee advanced into Maryland, and McClellan, without any especial assignment, took the field against Lee, resulting in the battle of Antietam and the retreat of Lee back to Virginia.

As early as the 28th of June Lincoln addressed a letter to Seward in which he outlined the policy of the war in all the

different departments. This was after the failure of the Peninsula campaign. It proved how thoroughly Lincoln kept in view his comprehensive strategy for the prosecution of the war. After the battle of Antietam there was continued dispute between Lincoln and McClellan, arising from what Lincoln believed to be tardiness on the part of the commander of the army to pursue the enemy. The Emancipation Proclamation speedily followed McClellan's victory at Antietam, and that rather intensified the opposing political views of the friends of Lincoln and McClellan. In a private letter, written by McClellan on September 25th, and given in his own book (page 615), McClellan said: "The President's late proclamation, the continuation of Stanton and Halleck in office, rendered it almost impossible for me to retain my commission and self-respect at the same time," and McClellan did not soften the asperities of the occasion by an address to his army, issued on the 7th of October, defining the relations of those in the military service toward the civil authorities. He said: "The remedy for political errors, if any are committed, is to be found only in the action of the people at the polls." I give these quotations to show under what grievances, whether real or assumed, McClellan suffered during this controversy, and it is not surprising that the chasm between the President and his General gradually widened because of the constantly increasing intensity of party prejudice against McClellan. During all this dispute Lincoln never exhibited even a shadow of resentment in anything that he said or did, so far as we have any record, and on the 13th of October he wrote an elaborate letter to McClellan, in which he temperately but very thoroughly discussed all the strategic lines of McClellan's prospective advance into Virginia, showing the most complete familiarity not only with the country that the army was to occupy, but with all the accepted rules of modern warfare. This controversy culminated in McClellan's removal from his command on the 5th of November, 1862, and that dated the end of his military career. He was ordered to report at Trenton for further orders, where he remained until the day of the Presidential

election in 1864, when he resigned his office, and Sheridan's appointment as his successor was announced in one of Stanton's characteristic bulletins on the following day, along with the news of McClellan's disastrous defeat for the Presidency.

I have given much time in this address to Lincoln's relations with McClellan because they present, in the strongest light, Lincoln's positive exercise of the high prerogatives of Commander-in-chief of the army. Whether he did it wisely or unwisely in his protracted controversy with McClellan cannot be here discussed, but the case of McClellan stands out most conspicuously as showing how completely Lincoln accepted and discharged the duties of the office of Commander-in-chief. The most disastrous battle in which the Army of the Potomac was engaged soon followed McClellan's retirement when Burnside was repulsed at Fredericksburg. At no stage of the war was the Army of the Potomac in such a demoralized condition as during the period from the defeat of Fredericksburg until Hooker was called to the command. Lincoln believed that some of Burnside's corps commanders were unfaithful to him, but where was he to get a commander? It is an open secret that Sedgwick, Meade, and Reynolds each in turn declined it, and the President finally turned to Hooker as the only man whose enthusiasm might inspire the demoralized army into effectiveness as an aggressive military power. That Lincoln was much distressed at the condition then existing is evident from many sources, but he makes it specially evident in a characteristic letter addressed by him to Hooker on the 26th of January, 1863, telling him of his assignment to the command of the Army of the Potomac. In this letter he says to Hooker:

"I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a Dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain success can set up as Dictators. What I now ask of you is military success and I will risk the Dictatorship."

Hooker accepted this pointed admonition like a true soldier. His answer was: "He talks to me like a father. I shall not answer this letter until I have won a great victory." On the 11th of April Lincoln again left a record of his views as to the proper movements of the Army of the Potomac, in which he pointedly declared the true policy of making the army of Lee the objective point instead of the Confederate capital, and from that theory he never departed. In this memorandum, he said: "Our prime object is the enemy's army in front of us, and not with or about Richmond at all, unless it be incidental to the main object."

I need not give in detail the result of Hooker's campaign to Chancellorsville. It was one of the most brilliant strategic movements of the war in the beginning and one of the most strangely disastrous results at the close. On the day after Hooker's retreat back across the Rapidan, the President wrote him a letter, in which there is not a trace of complaint against the commander, but clearly conveying Lincoln's profound sorrow at the result. He asked Hooker whether he had any plans for another early movement, concluding with these words: "If you have not, please inform me, so that I, incompetent as I may be, can try and assist in the formation of some plan for the army." When Lee began his movement northward towards Gettysburg, Hooker proposed to attack Lee's rear as soon as the movement was fully developed, to which Lincoln promptly replied, disapproving of the plan of attacking the enemy at Fredericksburg, which was Lee's rear, because the enemy would be in entrenchments, and, to use Lincoln's language, "so man for man worst you at that point, while his main force would, in some way, be getting an advantage of you northward." He added: "In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other." Hooker's next suggestion was to let Lee move northward and make a swift march upon Richmond, but this was also rejected by Lincoln because, as he says, Richmond, when invested, could not be taken in twenty days, and he added: "I think



Lee's army and not Richmond is your sure objective point." This was on the 10th of June, 1863. On the 14th of June he again telegraphed Hooker urging him to succor Winchester, which was then threatened by the advance of Lee's army, in which he made the following quaint suggestion: "If the head of Lee's army is at Martinsburg, and the tail of it on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the animal must be very slim somewhere. Could you not break him?" On the 16th of June he addressed a private letter to Hooker in which he spoke to him with the kind frankness so characteristic of him, gently portraying his faults and kindly pointing the way for him to act in harmony with Halleck, and all others whose aid was necessary to success. On the 27th of June Hooker was relieved from command at his own request, and Meade charged with the responsibility of fighting the decisive battle of the war at Gettysburg. I need not discuss any of the details of that campaign. The defeat of Lee at Gettysburg decided the issue of the war. Many bloody battles were fought thereafter, but from the 4th of July, 1863, the cause of the Confederacy was a lost cause, and the man who won that battle should have been the chieftain of the war.

I may here properly introduce two dispatches received by Lincoln from the battle-fields of Antietam and Gettysburg, which, I personally know, did much to make Lincoln distrust the capacity of both McClellan and Meade to appreciate the great purpose of the war. When Lee had retreated across the Potomac from Antietam on the 19th of September, 1862, McClellan telegraphed: "Our victory was complete. The enemy is driven back into Virginia. Maryland and Pennsylvania are now safe." Meade's congratulation to the army on the field of Gettysburg, July 4, 1863, closes as follows: "Our task is not yet accomplished, and the commanding general looks to the army for greater efforts to drive from our soil every vestige of the presence of the invader." The fact that both these commanders seemed to assume that their great work was to drive the enemy from northern soil, impressed Lincoln profoundly. In Mr. Hay's diary Lincoln is quoted as saying, upon the receipt of this dispatch: "Will our generals never



get that idea out of their heads? The whole country is our soil." His theory of the war was that the enemy could be fought much more advantageously on northern soil than in the South, as it enabled concentration of northern forces, and diffused southern forces in maintaining lines of supply; and before either of these battles was fought he had publicly declared his theory that Lee's army was the heart of the rebellion and that Richmond and other important military centres would be valueless while Lee's army was unbroken. It is known that Lincoln was at first strongly inclined to censure Meade for not fighting another battle at Williamsport. I saw the President soon after that battle and was amazed at his thorough familiarity with every highway and mountain pass which the armies had open to them. As it was near my own home I knew how accurate his information was, and he questioned me minutely as to distances and opportunities of the two armies in the race to Williamsport. When I asked him the direct question whether he was not satisfied with what Meade had accomplished, he answered in these words: "Now don't misunderstand me about General Meade. I am profoundly grateful down to the bottom of my boots for what he did at Gettysburg, but I think if I had been General Meade I would have fought another battle." He was extremely careful to avoid injustice to any of his commanders, and after fully considering the whole subject, he excused rather than justified Meade for not delivering battle to Lee at Williamsport. Had Meade done so and succeeded he would have been the great general of the war, but there are few generals who would have fought that battle with the forces of both sides nearly equal and Lee entrenched. Had he fought it and failed, he would have been severely censured; but failing to fight, he lost his one opportunity to be the lieutenant-general of the war.

I need not refer in detail to the Pope campaign of 1862. It is known to all present that the appointment of Pope and the creation of his department were entirely Lincoln's own acts. Without the knowledge of his Cabinet he slipped off quietly to West Point to confer with General Scott, but what transpired between them no one ever learned from Lincoln.

Indeed so much were Lincoln and the country perplexed about military commanders in 1862-63 that Senator Wade conceived the idea of making himself lieutenant-general and commander of the armies, and had many supporters. In this he followed the precedent of Senator Benton during the Mexican war, who then made an earnest effort to be appointed generalissimo to supersede both Scott and Taylor in the direction of military operations in Mexico.

The campaign for the relief of East Tennessee was one of Lincoln's early conceptions, and in September, 1862, he went to the War Department personally and left a memorandum order for a campaign into that State. Many reasons combined to prevent early obedience to his orders, but from that time forward there was not a movement made in the West that Lincoln did not carefully examine and revise to hasten the relief of Tennessee, and his letter to Halleck, February 16, 1862, when Fort Donelson was about to be captured, outlined a policy of campaign to reach the heart of Tennessee. While he thus carefully revised every strategic movement, he always scrupulously avoided giving instructions which might embarrass a general fighting in the field. After the defeat and victory at Shiloh, he called Halleck to the field to shield General Grant from the grossly unjust opposition that was surging against him, and in a letter to Halleck he said: "I have no instructions to give you ; go ahead, and all success attend you."

The failure of the iron-clads at Charleston in 1863 was one of the sore disappointments of the war, and Lincoln's instructions, sent jointly to General Hunter and Admiral Dupont, are explicit as to what they shall attempt to do. When General Banks was assigned to the Department of the Gulf in 1862, with a command of twenty thousand men, Lincoln's letter to him, dated November 22d, pointedly illustrates his complete familiarity with the purposes of the campaign, and his admonitions to General Banks present a singular mixture of censure and charitable judgment. When we turn to his letter to General Grant, written July 13, 1863, after the surrender of Vicksburg, we will remember how carefully Lincoln observed all strategic movements and also how he judged them. He was

glad to confess error when the truth required it, and in his letter of thanks to Grant, after the capture of Vicksburg, he told him that he believed that Grant should have moved differently, but added—"I now wish to make the personal acknowledgment that you were right and I was wrong." Early in the year 1864 Lincoln directed the movement into Florida, which resulted in the disastrous battle at Olustee, but he intended it as a political rather than as a military expedition. He in like manner directed combined military and political movements in Arkansas, Tennessee, Maryland, and Missouri. While Halleck was nominally Commander-in-chief of the army he had gradually ceased to be anything more than the chief of staff. Lincoln is quoted in Mr. Hay's diary as saying that, although Halleck had stipulated when he accepted the position, it should be with the full powers and responsibilities of the office, after the defeat of Pope, Halleck had "shrunk from responsibility whenever it was possible."

This brings us to the 8th of March, 1864, when Lincoln and Grant met for the first time in the White House, and Lincoln personally delivered to Grant his commission as Lieutenant-General. Immediately thereafter he was assigned as Commander-in-chief of the army. From that day Lincoln practically abdicated all his powers as Commander-in-chief, so far as they related to army movements. He had found a commander in whom he had implicit faith, and one who was fully in accord with his theory that the overthrow of Lee's army would be the overthrow of the rebellion, and Lincoln did not conceal his purpose to impose the entire responsibility on Grant. In a letter written to Grant April 30, 1864, just before Grant's movement in the Wilderness campaign, Lincoln said: "The particulars of your plan I neither know nor seek to know. You are vigilant and self-reliant, and, pleased with these, I wish not to intrude any constraint or restraint upon you." Lincoln not only meant what he said, but he fulfilled his promise to the end. How heartily he was in accord with Grant is known to all. There was never a military or personal dispute between them, and Lincoln felt more than satisfied with the wisdom of his appointment of Grant when he received from the

desperate carnage of the Wilderness the inspiring dispatch: "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." He had like faith in Sherman, and after his capture of Atlanta was more than willing to assent to Sherman's march to the Sea, because he trusted the man who was to lead the army in that heroic movement. In his letter of congratulations to Sherman at Savannah, December 26, 1864, he told how anxious and fearful he was when Sherman left Atlanta, but added: "Remembering that 'nothing risked nothing gained,' I did not interfere. Now the undertaking being a success the honor is all yours, for I believe none of us went further than to acquiesce."

Soon after Sherman's march into North Carolina, Lincoln met Grant and Sherman at City Point, where the whole aspect of the war was fully discussed, and where he gave his last suggestions as Commander-in-chief. They did not relate to the movements of armies but to the question of peace. The generous terms given by Grant to Lee at Appomattox were the reflex of Lincoln's suggestions at City Point, although doubtless in hearty accord with the great warrior's convictions; and Sherman, in his original agreement with Johnston for the surrender of his army, simply executed Mr. Lincoln's directions or suggestions as he understood them. The assassination of Lincoln suddenly brought a changed condition upon the country, and with it developed the intensest passions of civil war, but of these Sherman was ignorant, and he obeyed the orders of the Commander-in-chief in accepting terms of surrender that became at once impracticable after Lincoln had fallen by the assassin's bullet. Thus ends the story of Abraham Lincoln as Commander-in-chief in the most bloody and heroic war of modern times. I have simply presented facts, leaving for others the task of criticism; but this one fact will ever stand out conspicuously in the history of our civil war, that Lincoln was, in fact, Commander-in-chief from the first defeat at Manassas in July, 1861, until March, 1864, when the Silent Man of the West brought him welcome relief from that high prerogative and gave the Republic unity and peace.

## MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN SEDGWICK.

Read by General M. T. McMAHON, May 3, 1893.

OF the many soldiers of high rank who have made their names familiar to the people, and sanctified by sudden death upon the field the cause of the nation, there is not one who held a higher place in the popular regard as an officer of skill and a gentleman of honor than the commander of the Sixth Army Corps—Major-General John Sedgwick.

He was a thorough soldier, a man of unbending will, cool and well-disciplined in mind, quick in the inception and silent in the execution of plans; undisturbed in all the changing phases of a battle; intensely eager for success during the struggle, and yet neither elated overmuch by victory, nor unreasonably depressed by defeat. He was exacting in discipline, requiring of all beneath him prompt and unquestioning obedience, and yielding to the orders of his superiors all that he demanded of his subordinates.

As a soldier he had few equals; for in all the duties of his profession, whether they involved the fate of great armies or concerned the merest question of etiquette or routine, he was wholly faithful. This scrupulous fidelity and unbending strength of purpose in emergencies were the salient points of his professional character. For these he has been publicly honored in the army, and among the people; for these and for the great deeds through such qualities accomplished, has the nation mourned his irreparable loss.

Yet those who only knew Sedgwick as a soldier of high repute and blameless in all official acts, were ignorant of the noblest traits of his character, and of those splendid and touch-



ing attributes which, in the minds of many, were almost sufficient to eclipse his military fame. It was on account of that tenderness of disposition, that sensitive regard for others, that exact justice to all, the quiet sense of humor, and heartiness of friendship which marked him among his associates, that his death came like a great personal sorrow—calling forth tears from eyes “unused to the melting mood,” and spreading over the gallant army with which he was connected a gloom which defeat could not deepen nor the flush of victory dissipate.

These things however were written of him, when the sad intelligence of his fall was first made public, in a thousand presses; and it is not the object of this article to attempt a narrative of his life or a description of his character, but simply to recall a few incidents of his career, which those who served under or with him delighted in telling over and over again to while away the monotony of camp life in front of Petersburg, and in the changing bivouacs of the Shenandoah Valley.

From the little village of Cornwall Hollow, in Connecticut, he entered the military academy in the year 1833. Upon graduating he was appointed Second Lieutenant in the 2d Artillery, and served on the plains against the Indians, until the brilliant and romantic episode of the Mexican war. At Contreras and Churubusco he commanded his company, was complimented in orders, and brevetted Captain. At Molino del Rey he was again especially commended, and was brevetted Major for Chapultepec. He especially distinguished himself at the attack of the San Cosmo gate of the city of Mexico, and was especially commended in the reports. He was made full Captain in 1849, and when the new regiments were created in 1855 he was appointed Major of the 1st Cavalry. This appointment, wholly unsolicited and unexpected by him, was made, I may say, almost by the unanimous request and desire of the higher officers of the army. While in this position, he figured in the miniature civil war in bleeding Kansas, contending alternately against the disciples of John Brown and the border ruffians of Missouri. In March, 1861, he was made Lieutenant-Colonel of the 2d Cavalry, and in April of the

same year Colonel of the 4th Cavalry. In August, 1861, he was made Brigadier-General of Volunteers, and the following year received the full rank of Major-General.

On many battlefields, therefore, from his boyhood onward, he had ample opportunity of learning what an American soldier could do, and this, like all else that came under his observation, he laid away for future use, and made available in the greater operations in which it was his fortune to be subsequently engaged.

On the plains, as a commander of cavalry in the monotonous, difficult, dangerous, and inglorious contests against the Indians, he simply did his soldierly duty, always winning the commendation of his superiors, the love of his associates, and the respect of his men.

During this period of his service at Jefferson Barracks the cholera swept through his command, striking down officers and men alike. Sedgwick was spared throughout it all, and a great part of each day he spent in the hospitals, cheering the sick and consoling the dying.

He was little known outside of army circles, but in the army there was no one, from the general commanding down to the private soldier, better known or more warmly regarded.

When the civil war commenced he was duly ordered from the plains to the east, duly promoted to higher commands, and found himself in 1861 Brigadier-General of Volunteers, commanding a brigade in the army then being organized near Washington to retrieve the disaster of Bull Run, and to carry the colors of the Union and the authority of the United States into and through and over the revolted States.

His selection for this command, like that of many of the greatest of our soldiers who were similarly selected, was due to the wise foresight and intimate knowledge of the army possessed by the first organizer and great commander of the Army of the Potomac, George B. McClellan.

When there was a vacancy in the command of a division upon the Upper Potomac by the strange and unaccountable arrest, never explained, of Gen. Charles P. Stone, Sedgwick

was sent to the command of this division, then described as a corps of observation. But when at last the Army of the Potomac was completed and took the field in organized corps, Sedgwick's division became a part of the Second Army Corps.

Down the broad waters of the Potomac in that early day in spring, amid the thunders of artillery from fleet and fort, with waving flags and streamers gaily decked, hundreds of vessels sailed day after day, conveying the great Army of the Potomac to its destination at Fort Monroe, to begin the grand advance on Richmond.

Sedgwick's connection with these important events reveals one magnificent episode.

At Fair Oaks, on the 30th of May, when the treacherous river rose and seemed to sweep all hope of succor from the left wing of the Army of the Potomac, on which the whole force of the rebellion was suddenly hurled ; when bridge after bridge so carefully constructed had given way, and there remained but one, over which the water poured in a mighty torrent, and which was held in place by ropes attached to the trees upon either bank, Sedgwick's great will and iron nerve rose to the occasion higher than the waves, stronger than the mad river ; and over the trembling bridge, through the surging waters, he led his men, dragged his artillery, and accomplished a passage marvellous in its achievement, magnificent in its results.

With his arrival on that field all danger to the army and the cause for that day was removed. The enemy were repulsed and driven back at all points, and the following day defeated on every portion of the field. This affair illustrated one peculiar trait of Sedgwick's character and life. He was always at the right spot at the right time, and he seemed to get there or be there with such quiet precision that there appeared nothing strange in it until you critically examined the obstacles overcome. This feature fitted him peculiarly for the command of the Sixth Corps, which he attained somewhat later, for throughout the history of that corps repeated instances on important occasions are to be found when its

prompt and timely arrival accomplished decisive results. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that when such a commander succeeded to such a corps, the reputation of both should stand high through the army.

At Antietam, under the blue September sky in the early dawn, the reorganized Army of the Potomac, under its old commander, confronted upon a single field its old opponent. Hitherto all our great battles had been fought upon one side or the other in detail. Sedgwick commanded his division under the gallant Sumner, pushed forward on the right, leading his men with that earnest determination which always implied that the thing that he set out to do must be accomplished in spite of human resistance. His men melted away under the steady and destructive fire, yet he pressed the enemy back through the woods and the cornfield, beyond the memorable Dunker Church. He was bleeding from a painful wound, to which he referred petulantly as being merely an annoyance and awkward just at that time. At last, again struck by an enemy's bullet, he fell from loss of blood and exhaustion, and was carried from the field. His adjutant-general, the gallant Major Wm. D. Sedgwick, fell mortally wounded at his side. The contest at this point had been severe beyond description, and when Sedgwick's bleeding body was borne away, and the hearts of the men were drooping, it was the old Sixth Corps that pressed forward under Franklin and Smith and Slocum to restore our broken ranks, to save the remnant of Sedgwick's division, and assist in completing the glorious work of the day, and one of the greatest victories of the war. Sedgwick's wounds were very painful, but long before they were fully healed he was back in the field, and assigned to the command of the Ninth Corps. Referring to the pain and annoyance of his wounds, he once said laughingly: "If I am ever hit again, I hope it will settle me at once. I want no more wounds."

When the customary and expected change was made in the command of the Army of the Potomac after the first Fredericksburg, an interchange of commanders was ordered between the Ninth and Sixth Corps, which placed General "Baldy"



Smith in command of the one and General Sedgwick as the chief of the other. He joined the corps at the camp on the Rappahannock known as White Oak Church. When he came he was kindly received, even enthusiastically, notwithstanding the corps greatly mourned its late commanders, both Franklin and Smith.

The winter passed monotonously enough. It was a dismal camp, and the days went by right heavily until at the opening of spring our ancient labor was resumed, and once more the faithful old Army of the Potomac found itself upon the hated pontoons, crossing the river of death preliminary to the battles which made up the sad record of the Chancellorsville campaign. Inasmuch as this campaign and the events connected with it constitute perhaps the most important part of Sedgwick's history, I shall devote more of my time to it than to any other of the actions in which he was engaged.

The movements of General Hooker at that time were singularly well planned. Our army, occupying the Falmouth Heights and the left bank of the Rappahannock, was confronted by the army of General Lee occupying the opposite bank, the city of Fredericksburg, Marye's Heights, and the river above and below the city, a distance of some miles.

Hooker's plan consisted of transferring the greater part of the army rapidly and secretly some twenty miles above Lee's position, crossing the river in force, marching to the flank and rear of the rebel line, and compelling the enemy to evacuate a strongly fortified position, and come out and give battle outside his works in order to save his communication with Richmond.

While the movement was in progress, Sedgwick was left near his original camp a few miles below Fredericksburg in command of three corps of the army composing the left wing. These were his own, the Sixth Corps, the First, under command of General John F. Reynolds, and the Third, under command of General Daniel E. Sickles. With this strong force he was to cross the river, threaten the enemy's fortified position below Fredericksburg, and, without bringing on, if he could avoid it, a general engagement, so conduct himself as to



make the enemy believe that it was his intention to do so at any moment. In other words, he was left to create a formidable diversion, but still strong enough to fight if necessary. The crossing of the river was accomplished in the night-time. The enemy's pickets occupied the opposite bank and were within easy talking distance of our men. The rumble of heavy wagons carrying the pontoon boats could be heard across the river, and it was therefore determined that the boats should be carried down upon the shoulders of the men. The light brigade under Gen. Calvin E. Pratt was assigned to this important duty. After much delay, trouble, and vexation, the boats were at last launched before the enemy had any full realization of what was about to occur. The night was dark and foggy, but sounds could be heard at an unusual distance. Two or three times from the opposite bank the rebel pickets hailed with the usual "Hallo there, Yank, what's going on over there? What are you doing?" Our pickets occasionally replied, "Johnnie, we're coming over after you." This style of conversation occurred at intervals during the night as some unusual sound attracted the enemy's attention. When the boats were launched and manned by soldiers of the engineer brigade as oarsmen, the troops of General David A. Russell were embarked, sixty men in a boat; and in silence, the oars no more than making a ripple in the water, forty boat-loads slowly pushed from the shore side by side, and were lost in the fog before they had gone twenty feet from land. The dead silence still continued while those upon the shore watched with beating hearts, and listened with anxiety not to be described. It seemed an everlasting time while each one peered through the fog which fell like a pall upon the gallant band that had left us for the other shore. The river is not more than eighty or one hundred yards wide at this point, but the progress of the boats, owing probably to the necessity of going with great silence, was unusually slow. There was ominous stillness on the other bank. There seemed to be no movement of troops; we could hear no rumbling of artillery.

Suddenly upon the night air there rang from the enemy

one single clear word distinctly heard in all the boats, and across upon our bank, and well understood, "Fire!" The blaze of musketry in the fog along the whole river bank for two hundred yards seemed like the sudden opening of one great mouth of flame. The crash that followed took away some of the scenic effect of this brilliant display, and was of itself robbed of its effectiveness by the uncomfortable accompaniment of rattling bullets which, fortunately for those in the boats, were aimed too high to do much harm, except upon the innocent spectators who had not yet embarked. The rebel yell, familiar as it was to all of us, never seemed so ominous and disagreeable. Nothing was heard from the boats except here and there a word of command or encouragement, and afterwards, as the fire from the farther bank continued and grew, after the first volley, more straggling, the anxiety for one word from Russell became grave and great. In a few seconds a boat was seen returning, and our hearts grew chilled, believing that the attempt to land had been abandoned. As the boat, however, came out of the fog, it was seen that it was empty except as to the oarsmen. Then in another instant a clear, loud, exultant cheer, followed by another and another, told us that the works on the other bank were ours. The boats made another trip, carrying other regiments, and then the bridges were rapidly laid down and completed soon after daylight. In the meantime, a second crossing was effected about one mile farther below on the river, where Reynolds threw across one of his divisions. For three days we remained in this position skirmishing every day, keeping two divisions on the enemy's side of the river, the rest of the command in readiness to cross. Meanwhile Hooker, with the rest of the army, had rapidly and admirably accomplished the crossing of the river and the great flank march which formed the essential feature of his plan of action. With Slocum in advance he was sweeping down upon the enemy's flank, capturing even their outlying pickets. Upon Hooker's arrival on the field, for reasons never fully explained or understood, he checked Slocum's farther advance in the direction of Fredericksburg, contracted his own lines,

and seemed to assume the defensive, and maintained it during the rest of those unfortunate operations. Meanwhile he withdrew from Sedgwick's command first Sickles's corps and then Reynolds's, which had to march to join him by way of one of the upper fords; and Sedgwick was left at Franklin's Crossing, three miles below Fredericksburg, with the Sixth Corps alone, which numbered at that time about twenty-two thousand men. On Saturday night Sedgwick had one division of his command across the river deployed in front of the enemy's work, extending about four miles below the city.

An order from General Hooker received at half-past eleven at night directed him to take up his bridges, march to Fredericksburg upon our side of the river, relay the bridges, cross with his command, take the heights which dominated the town, known as Marye's Heights, capture the city, march out on the plank road in the direction of Chancellorsville, and join General Hooker's command at daylight. The distance of Chancellorsville from Fredericksburg is about eleven miles, the distance to be accomplished by withdrawing to our side of the river and marching by the Falmouth Heights to Fredericksburg, about five miles. Inasmuch as it would have been totally impossible in the time allowed for the whole march, to take up the bridges, transport them to Fredericksburg, and relay them there, General Sedgwick decided not to remove them, but to cross with his whole corps on the bridges as constructed, and move by the flank on the enemy's side of the river into Fredericksburg. By doing this he would save some hours of time. He moved at once to cross the river with his remaining division.

Brooks, who was in position, fronting the enemy's works, was sharply pressed by their pickets in the darkness, as if they desired to know whether we were withdrawing. Newton's and Howe's division, with the light brigade, marched in the direction of Fredericksburg. They were pressed as they advanced by the enemy's skirmishers, who were on the alert, and their progress, resisted in this manner, was necessarily cautious and slow.

It was the opening dawn, therefore, when the first brigade of Newton's command reached the town of Fredericksburg, moved out, and as soon as the deployment could be effected, assaulted the stone wall made memorable by the slaughter of our troops, under Burnside, in the previous December. This stone wall or line of rifle-pits, presented to us at the beginning of the slope which led up to Marye's Heights a smooth face of solid masonry, about six feet high, behind which, but on higher ground, was a strong line of the enemy's infantry. As our men advanced gallantly to the attack, supported by one or two batteries, the first in position, the enemy reserved their fire until our line was close at hand. The batteries at Marye's Heights crowning the crest behind the stone wall opened with terrible effect. It was impossible to withstand the fire; the men were ordered to fall back, and did so in good order, and without panic. When they reached favoring ground affording shelter, the line was ordered to lie down, and did so without confusion. Sedgwick rode out near the left of the line, and as he witnessed the repulse he remained watching the enemy's position with an expression on his face that I had never observed before. All the merry lines about his eyes had disappeared; his lips had settled into a fixed expression of determination, and the genial face which I had never seen before except in camp, seemed at that moment to be made of iron. A few of his staff were scattered in the vicinity; the others were along the line of the retiring troops, to indicate the position where the line was to halt, re-form, and lie down. When this was accomplished, the enemy from the rifle-pits perceiving a commanding officer whose presence indicated authority, directed their fire upon General Sedgwick. After a few seconds of delay I ventured to suggest to him to retire from his exposed position. At first he did not seem to hear me. Upon my repeating the suggestion as the bullets became more numerous, he turned to me with a rapid gesture, pulling down his old slouch hat as if to conceal the intense expression of his eyes, and said with strange emphasis: "By Heaven, sir, this must not delay us."

He slowly turned his horse, and rode back into the streets of the town.

During the few moments that he stood gazing at the enemy's works his plans were completed, and were carried out without the loss of a single instant.

Gibbon's division, which had crossed over on a bridge newly laid directly in front of the town, was ordered to move forward on the right to develop what could be accomplished by an attack in that direction. Howe was ordered to execute a similar move on the left. In the meantime, from Newton's division and the light brigade, assaulting columns were organized to carry the heights directly in our front if the flank movements should prove impracticable. Gibbon found himself confronted by the canal running parallel to the enemy's position and under the full fire of all their batteries. This he could not cross in line of battle; to cross it in column on a bridge constructed for the purpose under the fire which would be concentrated on him was destruction. Hazel Run on our left with its deep and precipitous bank rendered a similar good service to the enemy as a part of their defensive line and checked for the time the advance of Howe. The regiments for the main assault from the centre on Marye's Heights were collected as quickly as possible. These regiments were drawn from the various divisions of the corps. Our extreme left was still back at the position held on the previous day and strongly skirmishing with the enemy in their front. It was therefore ten o'clock before the assaulting columns were formed and ready to attack.

From the main street of Fredericksburg, running at right angles to the river, the plank-road leads up to the centre of the enemy's position.

From the limits of the city to the crest of Marye's Heights the distance is about half a mile. A toll-gate stands about half way up the slope. The heights on both sides of the road were crowned with batteries. A little above the toll-gate and at the commencement of the steeper slope to the left of the road as we faced the enemy's position, was the stone wall oc-



cupied still by a strong line of infantry. In front of the stone wall, about three hundred yards below and near the outskirts of the city, was our line of battle, repulsed at daylight. The enemy plainly saw our preparations for the assault and evidently did not wish to interfere with them. They seemed perfectly confident of the result ; when they saw that we intended to attack their direct front and centre, they scarcely disturbed our intentions by a single shot. At last it was my duty to report to the General that everything was in readiness. His instructions were that one column formed on the street leading to the plank-road should march directly up the plank-road ; that another and parallel column formed on a street about sixty yards to the right should march up through the fields towards the toll-gate. At this point he knew that they would receive the heaviest of the enemy's fire. He directed that the line of battle still lying in front of the stone wall and rifle-pits to the left of the plank-road should rise up at that instant and go forward with a cheer, and at a double-quick.

In this plan there was an admirable calculation and combination of what may be called the moral effects, and which are of much importance in a movement of this kind. The advance of our left column on the plank-road he knew would be a tempting target for the rifle-pits on their left, and by the time the head of the column approached the toll-gate they would no doubt draw the entire fire from the rifle-pits, that both columns would attract the full attention of the batteries on the heights, that the fire would reach its highest intensity as the heads of the columns reached the toll-gate, and then, if at all, they would commence to waver, and a single cheer from an advancing line of American soldiers, delivered as the Sixth Corps knew how to deliver it, would not only put new heart into the men composing the columns, but strike dismay to the defenders of the rifle-pits who would have already discharged their volley fire.

The result was as he expected. The men went forward gallantly at "trail arms." The artillery tore through our ranks ; the men neither halted nor hesitated. The right

column, by the very force of the fire on its front and flank, bent towards the plank-road, and the heads of the two columns came together at the toll-gate. There, for an instant, as when a strong, quiet stream moving in a new channel meets with some sudden obstacle, there was a momentary pause, and the men clustered around the frame building at the toll-gate seemed to hesitate, and, for an instant, it was doubtful whether they could advance. Out upon the clear summer air rang the cheer of Newton's men. Up at double-quick they sprang. The men in the rifle-pits, who had forgotten the line of battle in their zeal to destroy the advancing columns, saw their danger. The men of the columns burst like a mountain torrent over all barriers. Taking up the cheer of the line of battle they pressed forward magnificently, victoriously, and before the enemy was aware of the fact, still firing from their batteries on the hill, their attention distracted by the smoke of their own guns, by the cheering of the line of battle and its advance, the flag of the Sixth Maine Volunteers, supported by that regiment and its sister regiment, the Fifth Wisconsin, was planted, standing out upon the breeze between the guns of the Washington Light Artillery of Louisiana as their last discharges were made.

The morning dew was yet fresh upon the grass upon that pretty slope which led from the city limits to this crest of death; the blood of one thousand gallant men was mingled with it, many of them cold in death, many of them writhing in the agony of painful wounds. There were distant homes, where expectant wives were looking forward to the unknown agony yet to come. There were distant hearths where little children played, who knew not that at that moment on a grassy slope in far Virginia a cloud had fallen on their young lives never to be lifted again. There were hearts in many homes that day that were ready to break as they wearily waited for news from the front. Nevertheless the war went on, and the twenty thousand gallant men who swept that crest, less the one thousand bleeding on its slope, went forward under John Sedgwick.

Our advance was spitefully resisted. At Salem chapel, midway between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the enemy, strongly reinforced from the main army under Lee confronting Hooker, reinforced also by the troops who lined the river above Fredericksburg and who fell back upon the carrying of Marye's Heights, made a final stand. Brooks—God bless him! old commander of the Vermont Brigade, true-hearted gentleman, unequalled soldier, rough and ready, beloved of men, robust, strong, and prompt—went forward with his division of the red cross through the thick undergrowth that covered the mild ascent that led to Salem Heights. The sunken road across the crest at right angles to our line of march, filled with the rebel infantry, checked for the moment his advance, but he swept forward gallantly and well, pierced their line, and for a moment held the crest.

His flank and rear were assailed by the enemy, who overlapped him, and he was forced back through the undergrowth out into the clearing, followed closely and viciously until he was enabled to re-form under cover of our batteries, which, with grape and canister, rapidly served, checked the enemy under the personal supervision of Sedgwick. The next division, as fast as it arrived, was put into action, and the whole again advanced, steadily forcing its way up the crest, until at last night set in and there was the silence of death. All night long those two armies lay in the position in which they had fought during the closing hours of the day. There was no interchange of soldier's badinage; there was not a picket-shot to disturb the silence. No fires were lighted on either side, and the men lay down coffeeless on their grassy beds. Here and there the stretcher-men moved around silently bringing in their wounded or gathering in the dead. There was but one sound that disturbed the stillness. From the direction of Chancellorsville we could hear the low rumble of artillery, telling of marching columns. Strange but not unexpected rumors reached us from our rear that the city of Fredericksburg and Marye's Heights, which we had carried so gallantly at such a cost, were reoccupied by the enemy, reinforced from

the direction of Richmond. The situation of the corps was critical. Howe's division was formed in line of battle facing to the rear and toward Fredericksburg to resist an attack from that direction. Brooks and Newton remained on the field facing toward Chancellorsville, and the two lines thus formed in opposite directions, about two miles apart, were connected by a skirmish line of troops supporting frequent batteries. Everything indicated that the Sixth Corps would be overwhelmed by an attack from all sides at early daybreak. General Sedgwick, when all his arrangements were completed, lay down in the wet grass with his head pillowed on his saddle; but he slept not. Three times during the night he telegraphed to General Hooker, sending the dispatch to the river at Banks's Ford, a few miles above Fredericksburg, with which point we still held communication. There was a certain pathos in those dispatches that none who do not realize the situation can appreciate.

"I have reached this point," he said, "in obedience to orders. My advance is checked. The enemy is strongly reinforcing from your direction. I can plainly hear the rumble of their artillery. My losses are heavy. I will be, no doubt, attacked in strong force at daylight. Can you help me?"

This was the burden of the dispatches three times repeated during that still and anxious night. No answer came until eight o'clock of the following day. In the meantime the enemy wasted the hours in preparation.

The long hours went by, and at eight o'clock came a strange message from the commanding general.

"You are too far away for me to direct. Look to the safety of your corps. Fall back on Fredericksburg or cross the river at Banks's Ford as you deem best."

But to the strong and earnest appeal, "Can you help me strongly if I am attacked?" there was no reply. In the direction of Chancellorsville there was the silence of death. Not an answering gun replied to the crash of our artillery which echoed from every battery. The enemy on our front, in fact I may say our three fronts, replied. The commanders of the other

corps who stood inactive near Chancellorsville heard the incessant roar of the artillery near Salem chapel. They chafed almost to mutiny, because while this gallant little band, less than one-fifth of the army, was contending against these desperate odds, six corps stood idle within the sound of their guns. Sedgwick and Hooker have passed away, and have undergone that final judgment from which there is no appeal. I am not here to say one word in disparagement of the dead, much less of a gallant soldier like General Joseph Hooker; but I do stand here to vindicate the memory of one of the purest men, one of the truest patriots, one of the best and bravest, aye, and greatest soldiers that ever honored any land by a life of honorable service and a glorious death upon the field of battle. It has been stated before a committee of the national Congress, whose sole business seemed to be, during the several years of their continuance, to dishonor the names of the best and truest of our soldiers, that Sedgwick's failure to obey the orders of Hooker was one of the chief causes of the failure of the Chancellorsville campaign. This statement was principally made by a man who still lives and whom, therefore, I am at full liberty to answer. He has stated before this committee that General Sedgwick's delay and failure to obey his orders was the primal cause of the failure. The order to General Sedgwick to advance to Chancellorsville and be there at daylight, included another and more important commission. He was directed to make this march, impossible in itself in the time allowed, impossible if the march was unresisted. He was ordered to capture Fredericksburg and everything in it, which he did. He was ordered to carry Marye's Heights, which he did magnificently. He was ordered to advance upon the plank-road, which he did. He was also ordered to destroy any force that might intervene between him and the general commanding. This he gallantly attempted, and did as much in the line of destruction as it was possible to do with the force at his command. The same dispatch which ordered him to destroy any intervening force informed him that the army commanded by General Robert E. Lee was between him and the position



he was ordered to occupy at daylight. Now, an order to destroy General Lee and his army was very easy to issue. Its execution, as some of you gentlemen will perhaps remember, was attended with considerable difficulty; and when it is considered that during the forty-eight hours that Sedgwick was struggling to execute this part of the order, the main body of our army, consisting of six corps, never fired a shot, although within sound of Sedgwick's guns, I submit that any man who says that the failure could in any degree whatever be attributed to Sedgwick, insults every soldier of his command, and defames the memory of the dead.

When the day came, Lee overestimating, as appears from his report made subsequently, the extent of Sedgwick's forces, failed to make his attack in force until about five o'clock in the afternoon. He believed that Sedgwick was accompanied by Reynolds's corps, and he hesitated to attack until he could withdraw a sufficient force from Hooker's front to make his victory certain. The main attack was made in the afternoon about five o'clock, from the direction of Fredericksburg, and made gallantly and with vigor. One brigade of Howe's division, strongly posted, received the assault and was broken. The Vermont brigade was on the flank of Neill's, holding the woods which flanked also the rebel advance; it was commanded by General L. A. Grant, now Assistant Secretary of War, a gallant soldier whose name and fame are inseparably connected in many battles with this great brigade, which, without disparagement to others, I may say was never surpassed in valor or achievement by any similar body of men, in any army of the world. It poured in its steady contribution of well-directed bullets on the advancing masses of the rebellion, and the Sixth Corps and the army were saved. The night came down upon anxious hearts. The battle was over, nor gun nor color was lost. But the position of the old corps was still as critical as ever. I pass over the melancholy history of the hours that followed, filled as they were with contradictory orders, one revoking the other, and a third renewing the first. The Sixth Corps crossed the river that night, making their

passage over the pontoons lighted by the bursting shells which the enemy, with very creditable practice, were dropping in the vicinity of the bridges, and the next day Hooker, far above, re-crossed the river, and this campaign was over. Sedgwick lost five thousand men in his honest endeavor to execute the part of the order which directed him to destroy the army commanded by General Lee; the combined loss of all the other corps scarcely exceeded this. Then came the regular and periodical change in commanders, the annual picnic into Maryland and Pennsylvania, the panic in Washington, and at last, Gettysburg.

On Cemetery Ridge, amid gravestones shattered by shot and shell, behind hasty earthworks, our gallant brothers of the Second Corps, under the fire of one hundred and eighty guns and against the very flower of the invading army, made this Union an immortal thing and the name of Hancock a cherished memory that will live forever in the hearts of the American people.

The long night march of the Sixth Corps from Manchester to the field of Gettysburg and its timely arrival to retrieve the disaster that Sickles had suffered, were principal features of our Maryland campaign.

We had many marches that were prolonged and tedious; many that were forced by day and night both before and after the great deciding battle. On many a day he watched them as the troops moved out of camp in the morning or closed the long dusty march of the day, and when on one occasion in the Wilderness, after the Sixth Corps had suffered a serious disaster on the day previous, when the Vermont brigade returning after heavy losses, from their march to the assistance of the Second Corps, saw the General ride along the lines as they were coming into bivouac, they burst forth in a hearty, spontaneous cheer that touched him to the very heart; and when the cheers subsided one of them stepped to the front and called out with a comic and yet touching emphasis, "Three more for old Uncle John!" The General's bronzed face flushed like a girl's, and as the staff laughed at his embarrass-

ment it spread along the lines and the whole brigade laughed and cheered as if they were just returning from a summer's picnic and not from a bloody field, weary, worn, and with decimated ranks. Nor had they rest that night; all night long they labored with the pick and shovel, and the next morning came the long, weary march, with fighting and intrenching, again night marches or labor in the trenches; and through it all there was neither rest nor shelter. There was no word of complaint; there was no murmur of discontent; and the steady yeomanry that made up this old brigade indulged in occasional flashes of humor scarcely to be expected from the solid citizens of conservative New England.

The colored troops, who had joined us at the outset of this campaign for the first time, were green and inexperienced. They were, therefore, withheld from an active part in it; not, I suppose for any tenderness for them, but simply because the work then to be done could only be committed to veteran soldiers. When, therefore, one hot and dusty summer morning, Vermont was digging in the earthworks, the colored division of Burnside's corps passed through our lines, they looked very well in their new uniforms, but they seemed to fret and be discontented even under the burdens of their knapsacks. Thus far they had not fired a shot nor turned a shovel of earth. A stalwart citizen of Vermont, leaning upon his spade as the division went by, solemnly removed his hat and, bowing low with great dignity, said: "Good-morning, gentlemen; you must find this work exceedingly fatiguing."

The troops of the corps, owing to the long and trying marches which they had been compelled to make, acquired the habit of calling themselves "Sedgwick's foot cavalry," and maintained that they were kept on the gallop all the time. It was a joke among them that Sedgwick never stopped until his horse gave out, and on one occasion, in Virginia, when he had dismounted by the roadside and stood on a little bank leaning on the fence watching the troops as they went by, men in the ranks constantly called out: "Come on, we'll wait for you. Get another horse; we are in no hurry."

For some time the General did not notice these cries nor understand their significance. At last he turned to me and said, "What do they mean by 'Get another horse; we'll wait for you?'" I explained to him the significance of the language, and as I did so he laughed heartily, whereupon in the ranks they cried out, "See the old fellow laugh," and immediately the whole column took it up with enthusiastic cheers.

These things I mention chiefly to show the relationship between the commander and his troops. He could appreciate their humor, knowing that no thought of disrespect ever entered it, and a single smile from him went like a sunbeam through long columns of tired men until it broadened into a laugh, and culminated in cheers that came from the true hearts of as gallant soldiers as ever served a patriot cause.

After the Gettysburg campaign, Warrenton, and Hazel River, a winter of delights! when the Sixth Corps lived and revelled for six long months. There were horse-races and cock-fights, and balls attended by fair women from home. There were festivities such as only an army knows how to organize and enjoy. Everywhere picnics by day, and dancing by night. Each corps vied with the other as to the extent of its hospitalities. Each corps claimed to have the fastest horse, the best fighting cock, to be visited by the prettiest ladies, and to be altogether the best corps in the army. This extravagant claim, of course, was only true as to one corps, the Sixth, although I am free to say, as some of you may remember, that in the matter of horse-racing the Second Corps got the best of us on one memorable occasion and reduced the speculative officers of the Sixth to absolute penury until the next arrival of the paymaster. A last desperate effort to redeem our fortunes by sustaining at large odds a favorite chicken imported from the good city of Boston only added to our disasters; and when that unfortunate bird was laid away with funeral honors after only one round, the Sixth Corps decided almost unanimously that all this style of dissipation was highly immoral and should therefore be discouraged.

Through all this winter those who had occasion to live near



and around John Sedgwick saw the sweeter and more touching traits of his character. Modest as a girl, unassuming, gentle, just, pure in heart and in word, he endeared himself to the men who followed him and was loved by all with a love surpassing the love of woman. No picture that I can draw can give to you who knew him not an adequate conception of how lovable that man was.

Through all this winter of delights no man looked forward to the future except to plan amusements for the ensuing winter; for, strangely enough, we had got the idea that this war was to be continued indefinitely and during the rest of our lives.

We were not prophets nor the sons of prophets. What knew we then of the lurid fires that would lighten the Wilderness within a few short months? The angel of death hovered over many, but no prophetic shadow fell from his wings. Already was his mark upon the great centre of our circle, and yet in all our plans for the following winter, in all our discussions as to what we were to do to amuse ourselves and our visitors, Sedgwick was the central figure. Amid the rain and snow, and the mud, and the frost, among our canvas cities our fires burned cheerily and our hearts were light. Letters came and went from home and visitors by the thousand shared our hospitalities. The Sixth Corps headquarters, because it was Sedgwick's, was a central point of interest. Nothing disturbed us except the occasional report that our chief was to be taken from us to command the Army of the Potomac. This command, however, although not formally offered, he had still on several occasions most persistently declined. It was a winter of delights, but nevertheless the day came when from major-general to drummer boy there was not a dry eye in the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac.

On our line of battle at Spottsylvania, where on the day previous we had made an unsuccessful attack and suffered heavily, near a section of artillery at a fatal angle in our works, General Sedgwick stood with General Hyde, General Whittier, General Tompkins, and myself, directing the movement of our



men then occupying the rifle-pits. It was in the early morning, and a certain feeling of gloom pervaded the army. Sedgwick had slept the previous night unsheltered by tent or blanket. He seemed in excellent spirits although a little discouraged by the slow progress of the campaign, which seemed to be desperate fighting, day after day, with indecisive results. A few minutes before, he had spoken of some of the young officers of his staff in tender and kindly terms of affection.

He said a few jesting words to some of the men who passed before him as they moved into the rifle-pits. His manner, attitude, and gesture, as he stood, indicated to the enemy that he was an officer of rank and authority. He wore no uniform, not even a sword. From across the little valley which separated us from the enemy's line, from one of their sharpshooters concealed in the woods in front of us, came the swift messenger of death. Slowly, without a word, with a sad smile upon his lips, John Sedgwick fell and his great heart ceased to beat.

His life blood, pouring in a strong, steady stream from the wound, spirted over me. I made an effort to sustain him as he fell and in doing so fell with him.

He uttered no word and made no sign. It seemed to me if I could but make him hear and call his attention to the terrible effect his fall was having on our men he would by force of his great will rise up in spite of death. I called vainly in his ear—he made no answer.

His favorite aide, General Charles A. Whittier, bent over him with streaming eyes. General Tompkins, the chief of the artillery, and his surgeon, Dr. Ohlenschlager, raised him partly from the ground, and the pale and anxious faces of the men in the long line of rifle-pits were bent eagerly toward the group; but such was the force of discipline that although these men's hearts were filled with a great sorrow, although they knew that a terrible blow had fallen upon them, none left the ranks, and the silence which follows a great tragedy fell upon the summer woods of Spottsylvania on that morning of saddest memories.

It was my duty to report at general headquarters that the

Sixth Corps was without a commander, for General Ricketts, who was next in rank, understanding that it had been the desire of General Sedgwick that his old associate, General Horatio G. Wright of the First Division, should succeed him, had informed me that he declined to assume the command. When I reached general headquarters and dismounted in front of the tent of the adjutant-general of the army, the gentle and much loved Seth Williams, there were in that tent General Williams, and General Hunt, the chief of artillery, and Colonel Platt, the judge advocate-general of the army, and other veteran officers who had served through many years of warfare.

As they saw me covered with blood, General Williams started forward and said but one word, "Sedgwick?"

I could not answer. Each one in that tent, old gray-bearded warriors, burst into tears and for some minutes sobbed like children mourning a father.

They built a bower of evergreens among the pine woods and laid him out upon a rough bier made for him by soldier hands, and all day long there were strong men weeping by this funeral couch. They came from all parts of the army, the old and the young, the well and the wounded, officers and men, to take their last look at the beloved chieftain. Many thousands of brave men who composed that army were familiar with death in all its forms. Not once nor twice only had they seen strong men stricken into sudden death, and men of high rank, in high command, fall amid contending hosts. They had, perhaps, grown hardened and indifferent to what was necessarily of frequent occurrence and the common expectation of all. But when the news went that day, like an electric shock, along the lines of the Army of the Potomac that John Sedgwick was dead, a great loneliness fell upon the hearts of all, and men that scarcely ever heard his voice, many that scarcely knew him by sight, wept bitter tears as if they had lost an only friend, and all recalled how on many occasions, hearing on right or left or rear the thunder of hostile guns, all anxiety passed away from the minds of men at the simple remark, "It must be all right—Uncle John is there."

The Sixth Corps went on and served through the war. It stood all day long at the bloody angle under a fire that cut down the great trees in our front. It stood up in the withering slaughter of Cold Harbor. It crossed the great river to the dismal contest before Petersburg. It swept the valley under Sheridan as with a broom, and, massed in a mighty column of brigades, it broke through the stubborn lines of Petersburg, and snapped this rebellion in twain. But not all the glories that succeeded the 9th of May, not all the triumphs achieved by their valor in the later fields of the war, not all the tame years that have followed since, have effaced the memories of that one day in Spottsylvania when we all realized the fact that all our marches yet to be made, all our battles yet to be fought, all our deeds, whether good or ill, would never again win word of praise or censure from the silent lips of the great man that we loved and honored as only soldiers know how to love and honor leaders like Sedgwick.

Back to the quiet churchyard of Cornwall Hollow, which the boy had left so many years ago, came, accompanied by all the evidences of a nation's sorrow, the lifeless body of that great and simple-minded hero.

He sleeps beneath a plain monument erected by a sister's love; but his memory will never die among men who love their kind and who believe that

“ A country's a thing men must die for at need.”

## REMINISCENCES OF CADET AND ARMY SERVICE.

A Paper Read by Brevet Brigadier-General PETER MICHIE, U. S. Vol., Oct. 4, 1893.

I FIND that it is very difficult to clothe personal reminiscences in written language. To be most effective, they need the wider latitude of the spoken word and the friendly assistance of the roving eye, as well as the kindly nod of acquiescence and the occasional inter-ejaculations of gratification from one's listeners. I remember, on one occasion, General Sherman tried to read an address to the graduating class at West Point. But with his happy faculty of telling reminiscences in a charming conversational way, he could not be tied down to the beaten track of a written discourse. New thoughts would leap like rabbits at every turn of his path,—he lost his place,—his eye-glasses dropped off, and then he tossed his manuscript impatiently aside and proceeded to talk to the boys, scoring a magnificent success.

Now, under the stimulating influences of fraternal companionship in gatherings like these there is a wealth of personal experience lying close to the surface, ready to be turned up in the furrow,—stories of raid and skirmish, of bivouac and battle, that would illuminate and vivify the dry details of every official history. We know that these reminiscences cannot be strictly true, and it is not essential that they should be. The greatest heroes of the war are still in the land of the living, for they are ourselves, and in telling our stories we generally so proportion the details with each repetition as to magnify more and more our personal prowess and tone down our errors until with frequent telling we end with actually believing ourselves to be the very heroes our stories make us out to be. But what,

after all, is the true story? Is it not, in reality, a mosaic of innumerable bits of personal experience, each artfully apportioned to its own peculiar place so that both in form and color the finished picture may be in the completest harmony with our inherent love of truth and sense of justice?

So, likewise, we find narratives of all shades of color; some dull and prosaic, others vivid and lifelike, and some so embellished by a fertile imagination as to be ever refreshing. As an illustration of the latter let me offer a few quotations from the *official* reports of the celebrated Colonel J. O. Shelby of the Missouri Confederate cavalry, found in Volume 22, *War Records*.

"*General*: On the last day of December, 1862, when the old year was dying in the lap of the new, and January had sent its moaning winds to wail the requiem of the past, my brigade was on the march for foray on the border's side. The day was auspicious; a bright red sun had tempered the keen air to pleasantness, and cheered the mounted soldiers with the hopes of a gay and gallant trip. The first two days' march was long and comfortable; the third, the rain commenced, cold and chilling, and continued without intermission for three days, the grand old mountains standing bare against the dull and sombre sky, their heads heavy with the storms of centuries. The men suffered much, but keeping the bright goal of Missouri constantly in sight, spurred on and on quite merrily.

"The sun came up on the morning of the 8th like a ball of fire, and the day was gloomy and chill; but Springfield loomed up before us in the distance like a beautiful panorama, and the men, catching the inspiration of the scene, forgot all their trials and hardships and were eager for the rough, red fray. 'T was a bright and beautiful scene. There lay the quiet town, robed in the dull gray hue of the winter, its domes and spires stretching their skeleton hands to heaven, as if in prayer against the coming strife, and drawing nearer and nearer, long black lines came gleaming on, while the sun shone out like a golden bar, uncurling its yellow hair on earth and sky, stream and mountain, and lent the thrilling picture a sterner and fiercer light. My skirmishers advanced steadily, and now continual shots in front tell that the enemy are found and pressed sorely. I saw



the crisis, and ordered Lieutenant-Colonels Gilkey and Gordon to charge with their regiments, to support MacDonald. Gallantly it was done, and as gallantly sustained. At the command, a thousand warriors sprang to their feet, and, with one wild Missouri yell, burst upon the foe ; officers mix with men in the mad *melée*, and fight side by side ; some storm the fort at the headlong charge, others gain the houses from which the Federals had just been driven, and keep up the fight, while some push on after the flying foe. The storm increases and the combatants get closer and closer.

“ I heard the cannon’s shivering crash,  
As when the whirlwind rends the ash ;  
I heard the musket’s deadly clang,  
As if a thousand anvils rang :

“ The contest rages, and the wild death-dance goes merrily on.

“ Still Collins plies his lurid torch,  
Where balls will rend or powder scorch ;  
Still Shanks and Gordon, side by side,  
Like veteran heroes stem the tide.”

Again speaking of the loss of three of his officers, he says :

“ They form an illustrious trio,—three of the grand immortal names that were not born to die. Peace to their ashes ! When the warfare of the world is over, when time strikes records with eternity, and mortality is paling beyond the sunset shore, and the billows of dissolution are white with the wrecks of the universe, these deathless spirits will rise beautiful from their urns of death and chambers of decay, and join the noble band of Southern martyrs that have fallen ‘with their backs to the field and their feet to the foe.’ ”

In another report, we find :

“ Upon the eventful morning of the 7th, long before the full round moon had died in the lap of the dawn ; long before the watching stars had grown dim with age, my brigade was saddled, formed, and their steeds champīng frosted bits in the cold keen air of a December morning, ready and eager for the march. After advancing rapidly and without intermission for several hours, I struck their trail, hot with the passage of many feet, reeking with the footprints of the invader. After riding hard for about an hour, my advance came full

upon the foe, and with the mad, fierce whoop of men who have wrongs to right and blood to avenge, they dashed on and away at the *pas de charge*,—driving the frightened Federals before them like chaff before the winds of heaven. Still the rout continues.

“ Tramp, tramp, along the land they ride,  
 Splash, splash, along the lea ;  
 The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,  
 The flashing pebbles flee.”

Now had I at command the wealth of words, the poetic fancy, and the soul-stirring power of expression of the brave and gallant Shelby, I would have selected some scene of battle and carnage for your entertainment to-night. But knowing full well my own limitations, I am going to ask your indulgence while I relate some reminiscences that will tax both your time and patience, for I hope to begin at the commencement of the war and to end four years thereafter.

West Point I found to be particularly democratic in its tendencies. There was no distinction between rich and poor ; Cadets being without money had no pockets and such adventitious aids to popularity were therefore eliminated. Men were rated according to those qualities that youth worships as ideals. The grade of good-fellowship was fixed by the unwritten laws of honor, charity, and all that is summed up in the word manliness. Though ability in studies and aptitude for the enforced military exercises were the official means of grading the young men in class rank, he who was fearless, outspoken, generous, and self-sacrificing became the leader among his fellows. The system of responsibility and methods of self-government introduced as far back as 1819, proved to be admirable means to develop individual character without sacrificing the unity of purpose of the establishment. Strict obedience and just subordination when controlled by the helm of considerate justice forced the advance toward the desired goal by the most direct course.

Illustrative of the methods of instruction, I recall the story of a young plebe, new to the vernacular of military propriety, who having put his mathematical work on the black-board,

with the utmost exactness, carefully conned it over till he was certain that he was fully prepared to make a max. Turning towards his instructor, a gruff but kindly old army officer, he assumed the proper position of a soldier and thus began: "I am requested to demonstrate the binomial theorem."—"No, sir," replied the grim soldier; "you are not requested, you are *required*, to do so, sir; go on."

Another, the son of a prominent general officer of the Irish Brigade, when asked by his instructor, "Why is this so, sir?" replied in his rich brogue: "The book says so, sir." "That is not a reason," answers the officer. "Well, sir," said he, "this is the first place I've ever been where a man is required to doubt the author."

It is always a very touching as well as an instructive sight to see the entering class, or plebes as they are called, when they first report for duty. No one would then think that West Point is a hot-bed of aristocracy, as has often been charged. Coming as they do from every Congressional district of the United States, they are not by any means homogeneous, neither in dress, facial characteristics, culture, nor intellectual development. The strict discipline, hard study, and close confinement demanded of them after admission are entirely unexpected by the greater number of those who think they would like to become military heroes. But it speaks well for the average pluck of the American youth, that most of the failures to succeed in graduating after once being admitted, are due to inability to master the course of studies, and not to the restrictions of the military service. Many years ago, before the present methods of the entrance examination were adopted, it was the custom to give the new cadets some preliminary instruction before they were examined by the academic board for admission. This instruction was entrusted to cadets under the supervision of the professors, who made frequent visitations to the different section rooms, and thus became acquainted with the doubtful cases before the oral investigation. When the professors were present, or when an army officer visited the section room to see that everything was going on all right, every detail was

conducted with the strictest military propriety ; what sometimes occurred on other occasions I shall briefly relate.

Having been selected in 1862 as a cadet instructor for a dozen or so of the new cadets, I devoted myself with earnestness to the task of making them proficient in all the subjects of their examination for admission, and I was so successful that I found that I still had a few days at disposal, which I thought could not be put to a better use than in instilling into them some of the principles of military subordination and methods of analytical reasoning. In this latter determination it is needless to say that I did not have the requisite authority from my superior officers, nor do I believe they were ever aware of my delinquency in this respect. At the designated hour, the young gentlemen were marched to the section room by one of their number, where they were received according to strict military propriety. They were seated at the word of command, all going down together promptly. Upon calling one by name, he was taught to spring with life into the centre of the room and assume the position of a soldier, to answer with brevity any and all questions asked him, and after the enunciation of his subject was given, to make an "about face," go to the black-board, and get to work. We will now illustrate one of these extraordinary sessions which belong to the past and will certainly never return.

The cadet instructor sharply scrutinizes the eager faces before him and in a sharp military tone calls, "Mr. King." Up jumps Mr. King and reaches the middle of the floor in an instant. "Altogether too slow, Mr. King. You must always anticipate the word of command, sir. Now try again and be alert, sir." So Mr. King, expecting to be called again, is sitting on the edge of his seat, all his muscles in tension, ready to spring as soon as the instructor opens his lips. "Mr.—Smith," shouts the instructor, and, as a consequence, both King and Smith collide in the centre of the room. "What do you mean, Mr. King, by trying to deprive your comrade of the opportunity of being instructed. Such selfish conduct, sir, is not that which should characterize the relations of

brothers in arms. But owing to your inexperience I am constrained to overlook your conduct at this time, and will therefore inquire of you whether you have ever studied the rule of three."—"Yes, sir."—"Then, sir, you may go to the black-board and solve this problem: *If three men, one of them being a female and the other a nigger, start out simultaneously, which will get there first, and why?*"

Mr. King having been disposed of, then come in turn Smith, Brown, and Jones, who, after the instructor has learned all he desires to know of their previous condition, hopes, aims, etc., are set to work in this fashion.

"Mr. Smith, have you ever studied zoölogy?"

"No, sir."

"But surely, sir, you have observed the habits of some species of the animal kingdom—certainly those of the domestic quadrupeds, such as the horse, cow, dog, or cat? At all events, sir, you may illustrate this important branch of human knowledge by the solution of this problem: *'If a hard knot be tied in a cat's tail, which way, how long, and with what success will she run after it, and who tied the knot?'*"

"Mr. Brown, presuming, sir, that you have studied the classics anterior to the epoch when the President of these United States, in the exercise of his wise discretion, selected you from among all the embryonic military geniuses of your Congressional district and honored both you and himself by giving you a warrant to proceed to West Point, bringing with you not only the hopes, aspirations, and expectations of your friends and relatives, but what is much more important, the determination to graduate with the highest honors of your class and thus emulate the example of your predecessor; and now, since by reporting to the Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, you have caused him to experience that peace and happiness that come from the prompt and satisfactory execution of legitimate orders, you may proceed to the black-board with the dignity of true military bearing and inscribe your name with your accustomed chirography in the right-hand upper corner of the rectangular space allotted to



you, remembering that a grateful country in anticipation of your future valuable services in upholding its honor and glory has generously bestowed upon you the means of obeying these instructions without any personal expense to you or your friends; and now to test the extent of your acquirements in classic lore you will write with deliberation this memorable sentence, once uttered by Cæsar as he was about to cross the Rubicon, to wit: '*Tempus fugit.*'—One moment, Mr. Brown, be not impatient. What is the meaning, sir, in our vernacular, of the sentence I have given you?"—"Time flies, sir."—"Well, Mr. Brown, what are you standing there for wasting this valuable commodity of the military art? Are you not aware that it is gone forever never more to return? Under the circumstances, sir, since you have lost the first half of the sentence you may discuss the last half only and give a full description of the flies there referred to, including their origin, habits, markings, and their relation to the butterfly."

"Mr. Jones, you are all at sea in regard to the subject which I am about to assign to you, and therefore I infer that you are well up in the subject of navigation."—"No, sir, I have never studied navigation."—"Well! well! what a misfortune! You see that I had marked you down for the next subject on my list, and it is a maxim in military operations that the next man for detail has to have the next duty to perform. It is not material nor pertinent to the issue whether he likes the duty or not, or whether some one else is better fitted by nature or abilities to perform this duty; he, alone, must be assigned. In the exercise of this perfect impartiality which peculiarly characterizes the military profession, it will happen in the future that you will be assigned to be the judge advocate of a court-martial, though you know no law, and in the exercise of this office you will be able to advise many officers older in years and superior in rank to yourself, and you will derive no little gratification in having them hauled over the coals by the reviewing authority should they act on your legal advice. Now in order that you may display your knowledge both of law and of navigation you will solve this problem:

*"If a canal-boat heads west-north-west by the horse's tail and a flaw is coming up from the south, would the captain be justified, according to the rules of maritime warfare, in taking a reef in the stove pipe without asking the cook?"*

Having engaged the other members in similar investigations, such as "*whether a house burns up or down,*" "*whether a stove should have a door,*" and "*why the mouth of a river should not be in its head,*" I had on the floor a bright intelligent young fellow whose reticence and ready obedience saved me from the serious consequences of my love of mischief. A knock was heard at the door of my recitation room, indicating the immediate inspection of an army officer. It was the soldierly Bayard, afterwards killed at Fredericksburg. My heart sank clear down, for I knew that the slightest investigation would reveal subjects of instruction and methods of teaching not specified in the schedule. With quick wit, however, I rose to the occasion. "That 's wrong, sir; try it again. Spell legible."—"Legible, legible."—"That is quite correct *now*. Remember that one is apt from the pronunciation of the word to think that it is spelled *leg-a-ble*. Try cataract," and so I continued to give out words to spell until the officer left the room. I watched him narrowly out of the corner of my eye lest he should be inclined to inquire as to what the young fellows were doing at the black-boards, but my good fortune and heretofore good reputation saved me for the service. One of these young fellows was Captain Charles King, now well known as the agreeable writer of army stories, and I am sure he bears me no malice for the means I employed in giving him his first lessons in military subordination.

When I entered the Military Academy in 1859, the country was enjoying the blessings of a profound peace, but when I graduated in 1863, it was overwhelmed by the miseries of a stupendous war. When the mutterings of the rebellion first reached the quiet banks of the Hudson, its diverse influences were acutely felt by the cadets and officers. Gathered as they were from every section of the country they reflected the peculiar views of the many communities from which they came.

The sovereignty of States, the right of Secession, Slavery, and all the burning questions of the hour were fiercely combated by partisans on both sides. The same temperaments that were afterwards so distinctly accentuated by men from the South and the North, when they were arrayed against each other in armed conflict, were here displayed in wordy controversies, until at last each had settled the matter in his own mind and determined his future course of action. The Southern men had a much more difficult question to decide than their Northern comrades. For they could clearly foresee that the march of events would soon sever their connection with the beloved academy, that the closest friendships would soon be disrupted, and they would be engulfed in a struggle whose end no man could predict. I have always believed that while a few of the more hot-headed were carried away by the passionate influences of the hour, there were many who in their hours of solitude felt the deepest anxiety and the bitterness of the sacrifice they found forced inexorably upon them. On the one hand, loyalty to the flag, obligation to the Government, strict interpretation of duty, the strongest associations of friendship, and love for the dear old academy; on the other, inherited fealty to their native States, family ties, home associations, and all the strong influences that were brought to bear upon them from their sections of the country; such were the anchors that held them and such the stresses that ruptured them. One by one, as the States seceded, so did their cadet representatives withdraw by resignation. Many were the sorrowful partings among comrades; hands were clasped, bitter tears shed, and good-bye greetings given as the separations came. But there were some also who after the severest of mental conflicts decided to remain true to the constituted authorities of the country. They had to endure the taunts, sneers, and averted countenances of their former bosom-friends, as well as that isolation which arises from a misconception of their status by those who would have been glad to have given them their warmest support and sympathy. I recall a grand and manly fellow, loyal to the core, who, through all entreaties, expostulations, and threats of ostra-

cism, and finally even having the recognition of blood relationship denied him, stood his ground manfully and, after graduation, fought bravely through the whole war, and at Olustee I saw him grievously wounded in battle, a martyr to his firm convictions of duty.

Among my comrades were many who afterwards did good service during the war. When the days of their instruction ended they were hurried off to the field, and it was not long before reports of their gallant deeds came back to the academy to inspire the rest of us with the hope of emulation. There was Harry Wilson, of sanguine temperament and active brain, whose magnificent services, culminating in the successful Selma campaign, demonstrated that he was a born leader of men; Wesley Merritt, a renowned cavalry leader, became one of Sheridan's most trusted and efficient lieutenants; Horace Porter, the adjutant of the class, even then distinguished equally for his delightful wit and humor and high scholarship, possessed those qualities of personal courage, prudent foresight, and quick judgment which were so admirably adjusted in his composition as to qualify him in an eminent degree for the position of confidential aide-de-camp to our great captain—General Grant; Adelbert Ames, the fighting hero of Fort Fisher, whose famous division, under his own personal supervision, drove the enemy successively from traverse to traverse until after the bloodiest of struggles the work was taken; Emory Upton, the author of tactics, came to West Point a raw country lad, patiently plodded through his course, improving his standing year by year, and was generally considered to be a quiet, peaceful, negative fellow, but developed into a magnificent leader of assaulting columns and a fighting general of the first magnitude; Kilpatrick, Mackenzie, and Custer became great leaders of cavalry; Randol, Pennington, Henry, artillerists of exceptional skill; and many others of equal or lesser fame too numerous to mention here. Besides these famous men there were those who early gave their young lives as sacrifices to their country. Alonzo Cushing, no less gallant than his famous brother of the navy the hero of the *Albemarle*, who at



Gettysburg, though severely wounded, refused to leave his guns, but continued to pour grape and canister into the advancing columns of the rebels until they had reached the very muzzles of his pieces, where he was killed—a mere youth of the age of twenty-two. Here also fell O'Rourke and Hazlitt, while other fields claimed as their sacrifice Kingsbury and Cross and Kirby and Jones and Dutton, all of whom less than two years before were bright and happy boys at West Point, animated with loyal ambition to serve their country in her extremity.

In recalling these eminent men as they appeared to me in the familiar intercourse of student life, I do not remember that they impressed me as possessing exceptional military talents—such talents as their after-career showed must have been undoubtedly latent. They were all good fellows, about the same as are now found in every class: some careful in behavior and attentive to discipline, and others, on the contrary, quite the reverse. Custer, for example, was always in trouble with the authorities. He never saw the adjutant in full uniform that he did not suspect that he was the object of his search for the purpose of being placed in arrest, and to have five minutes more freedom he would cut and run for it, to delay if possible the well-known formula: "Sir, you are hereby placed in arrest and confined to your quarters by direction of the superintendent." He had more fun, gave his friends more anxiety, walked more tours of extra guard, and came nearer being dismissed more often than any other cadet I have ever known. Custer said that there were but two positions of distinction in a class,—head and foot; and as he soon found that he could not be head he determined that he would support his class as a solid base, and though it required great circumspection and much ticklish work he succeeded in his lofty ambition. When Custer, the foot man of his class, stood before the superintendent to receive his diploma, the latter looked at him steadily for a moment, no doubt immensely relieved that his task of disciplining this spirited youth was happily ended; while Custer, on the other hand, was equally happy, as with a very low and apparently humble bow he received the coveted prize for



which he had endured four years of a very precarious existence. It is related of this superintendent, who was a very rigid disciplinarian, that a conversation was overheard between two very humble slop-carriers, after the news of his being relieved from duty was made public, in this wise: "Well, Pat, the Major's gone."—"Yis, thru indade, the Major's gone; and many a dhry eye followed him."

In the earlier days of my cadetship it was a rare sight to behold a general officer. General Scott, a frequent visitor to West Point, was the beau ideal of all the cadets. A veteran of 1812 and hero of the Mexican war, his commanding stature was made still more imposing when dressed in the full uniform of his rank. His eagle eye seemed to pierce the very thoughts of the cadets as he inspected our ranks when he gave us the honor of a review, and we did strive to the utmost to merit the approbation of this splendid soldier. I also recall seeing General Philip St. George Cooke, but as he wore a tall silk hat with his dress uniform, this incongruity somewhat militated against his military standing in our estimation. But there were also on duty at the academy many subaltern officers who were destined to become famous generals, though we did not then suspect it. There was Lieutenant John M. Schofield of the artillery, with fewer rings of annual growth around his middle section than now, who was a splendid instructor in natural philosophy. Endowed with great analytical mental powers, he was devoting himself to the study of the higher mathematics and to scientific investigation. Had not the war demanded his services in the wider sphere of public usefulness he would have become famous as a scientific investigator and author, for he had resigned his commission in the army in August, 1860, to accept the chair of Physics in the Washington University at St. Louis. Lieutenant G. K. Warren of the Topogs taught us conic sections, surveying, and the calculus; a keen, alert, and fascinating teacher. Even then he had gained a most distinguished reputation as an explorer of our western territory, so that in addition to winning our admiration by his soldierly bearing and scientific ability, he also com-

pelled our heartiest affection by his many endearing qualities as a manly man. As my personal affection for him, my admiration of his splendid military capacity, and my sympathy in his unmerited censure have grown with my years, I will always cherish the belief that his countrymen will in time do full justice to the memory of this noble soldier and patriot. Lieutenant O. O. Howard relieved Warren as our mathematical instructor. He was a most kind and courteous gentleman, very forbearing with all our many shortcomings, and exceedingly considerate of our faults. He was then, as now, known to be intensely interested in his Master's work, and was supposed to be studying for the ministry. Without impugning the motives of the members of his immortal section in mathematics it seemed a very curious circumstance that every one of them was a frequent attendant of the cadets' prayer-meeting, in which Howard took a very active interest, and each seemed to be as actively eager to be found worthy of that immortality which is to come, as to escape the just judgment of the academic board in the approaching examination. We had for commandant that magnificent soldier, John F. Reynolds, who afterwards fell at Gettysburg; Lieutenant George D. Bayard, convalescing from wounds received in the Indian wars, taught us equitation, and who, as major-general, was killed at Fredericksburg. Comstock, Weitzel, and Craighill, all of whom afterwards became distinguished military engineers, taught civil and military engineering; McCook, Saxton, Garrard, and Williams instructed us in military discipline and the tactics of three arms of the service; Webb, Benet, and many others equally distinguished afterwards in the great war, taught us, as lieutenants, in other studies. But when the war broke out these gallant and accomplished men could not rest easy in these peaceful pursuits; they sought active service and persistently renewed their solicitations for authority to join their regiments in the field; they were replaced by others equally impatient, and by the fall of '61 some of the convalescent wounded became available for this duty. While we could not foresee the splendid career that many of these un-

tried lieutenants were destined to achieve, we knew that they would do whatever was assigned to them with unselfish devotion and undaunted courage, and we followed their daily record with the most eager interest and professional pride.

That it was a very difficult thing for us to attend strictly to our theoretical studies while battles were being fought and laurels won by our former comrades, goes without saying. Indeed, we fondly hoped that the War Department would immediately release us from academic duty and order us to the field, so that even the little we had learned might be made available. But wiser counsels prevailed, and we were not graduated until our academical course was completed. The four years of strict discipline, hard study, and simple habits had developed in each of us such a spirit that we were ready to undertake any duty, to go upon any service, or assume any responsibility; for we had been trained to do our thinking and not to shirk the consequences of our decisions.

But time relentlessly brought forward the longed-for moment, even to the most impatient. The last day of our cadet life arrived. A hurried visit to the homes we had not seen for two years, a speedy departure to the front, and the class of '63 was soon absorbed in the vast volunteer armies that had already learned the art of war by the efficient methods of active service in the field. Of my experience in this new field of duty I had hoped to be able to say something to-night, but the limits of your forbearance are already reached. But I may be permitted to say in conclusion that in West Point our beloved country has a living spring of nationality, whence flows a clear crystal stream of undoubted patriotism, unsullied integrity, and unselfish devotion. Its past record is part of the nation's history, and that it will bear its part well in whatever the future may have in store for this grandest of all countries, is a sentiment which, I am sure, you who so actively participated in the events of the great rebellion, will cordially endorse.

## THE DUTY AND VALUE OF PATRIOTISM.

Address by Archbishop IRELAND, before the New York Commandery of the Loyal Legion, New York, April 4, 1894.

COMMANDER, COMPANIONS: To speak of patriotism is my evening's task. An easy and a gracious one it ought to be. Patriotism is personified in my audience. The honor is mine to address the country's heroes, the country's martyrs. At country's call you quickly buckled your armor on, and, rushing where battle raged, you offered for country's life the life-blood of your hearts. Many of you bear upon limb and face the sacred stigmata of patriotism. Your tried hands are doubly pledged in purest unselfishness and bravest resolve to uphold in the reign of peace the loved flag which in days of war they carried over gory fields above stain or reproach. I could not, if I would, close the portals of my soul to the rich and sweet inspirations which come to me from your souls.

I shall define patriotism as you understand and feel it. Patriotism is love of country, and loyalty to its life and weal—love tender and strong, tender as the love of son for mother, strong as the pillars of death; loyalty generous and disinterested, shrinking from no sacrifice, seeking no reward save country's honor and country's triumph.

Patriotism! There is magic in the word. It is bliss to repeat it. Through ages the human race burnt the incense of admiration and reverence at the shrines of patriotism. The most beautiful pages of history are those which count its deeds. Fireside tales, the outpourings of the memories of peoples, borrow from it their warmest glow. Poets are sweetest when they

re-echo its whisperings; orators are most potent when they thrill its chords to music.

Pagan nations were wrong when they made gods of their noblest patriots. But the error was the excess of a great truth, that heaven unites with earth in approving and blessing patriotism; that patriotism is one of earth's highest virtues, worthy to have come down from the atmosphere of the skies.

The exalted patriotism of the exiled Hebrew exhaled itself in a canticle of religion which Jehovah inspired, and which has been transmitted, as the inheritance of God's people to the Christian church: "Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept, when we remembered Sion.—If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten. Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I do not remember thee, if I do not make Jerusalem the beginning of my joy."

The human race pays homage to patriotism, because of its supreme value. The value of patriotism to a people is above gold and precious stones, above commerce and industry, above citadels and war ships. Patriotism is the vital spark of national honor; it is the fount of the nation's prosperity, the shield of the nation's safety. Take patriotism away, the nation's soul has fled, bloom and beauty have vanished, from the nation's countenance.

The human race pays homage to patriotism, because of its supreme loveliness. Patriotism goes out to what is among earth's possessions the most precious, the first and best and dearest—country, and its effusion is the fragrant flowering of the purest and noblest sentiments of the heart.

Patriotism is innate in all men; the absence of it betokens a perversion of human nature: but it grows its full growth only where thoughts are elevated and heart-beatings are generous.

Next to God is country, and next to religion is patriotism. No praise goes beyond its deserts. It is sublime in its heroic oblation upon the field of battle. "O glorious is he," exclaims in Homer the Trojan warrior, "who for his country falls!" It is sublime in the oft-repeated toil of dutiful citizenship.



"Of all human doings," writes Cicero, "none is more honorable and more estimable than to merit well of the commonwealth."

Countries are of divine appointment. The Most High "divided the nations, separated the sons of Adam, and appointed the bounds of peoples." The physical and moral necessities of God's creatures are revelations of His will and laws. Man is born a social being. A condition of his existence and of his growth to mature age is the family. Nor does the family suffice to itself. A larger social organism is needed, into which families gather, so as to obtain from one another security to life and property, and aid in the development of the faculties and powers with which nature has endowed the children of men. The whole human race is too extensive and too diversified in interests to serve those ends: hence its subdivisions into countries or peoples. Countries have their providential limits—the waters of a sea, a mountain range, the lines of similarity of requirements, or of methods of living. The limits widen in space according to the measure of the destinies which the great Ruler allots to peoples, and the importance of their parts in the mighty work of the cycles of years, the ever-advancing tide of humanity's evolution. The Lord is the God of nations, because He is the God of men. No nation is born into life, or vanishes back into nothingness without his bidding. I believe in the providence of God over countries as I believe in His wisdom and His love, and my patriotism to my country rises within my soul invested with the halo of my religion to my God.

More than a century ago a trans-Atlantic poet and philosopher, reading well the signs, wrote :

" Westward the star of empire takes its way.  
The first four acts already past,  
A fifth shall close the drama with the day :  
Time's noblest offspring is the last."

Berkeley's prophetic eye had descried America. What shall I say in a brief discourse of my country's value and

beauty, of her claims to my love and loyalty? I will pass by in silence her fields and forests, her rivers and seas, the boundless riches hidden beneath her soil and amid the rocks of her mountains, her pure and health-giving air, her transcendent wealth of nature's fairest and most precious gifts. I will not speak of the noble qualities and robust deeds of her sons, skilled in commerce and industry, valorous in war, prosperous in peace. In all these things America is opulent and great: but beyond them and above them is her singular grandeur, to which her material splendor is only the fitting circumstance.

America born into the family of nations in these latter times is the highest billow in humanity's evolution, the crowning effort of ages in the aggrandizement of man. Unless we take her in this altitude, we do not comprehend her; we belittle her towering stature, and conceal the singular design of Providence in her creation.

America is the country of human dignity, and human liberty.

When the fathers of the republic declared "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," a cardinal principle was enunciated, which in its truth was as old as the race, but in practical realization almost unknown.

Slowly, amid sufferings and revolutions, humanity had been reaching out toward a reign of the rights of man. Ante-Christian paganism had utterly denied such rights. It allowed nothing to man as man; he was what wealth, place, or power made him. Even the wise Aristotle taught that some men were intended by nature to be slaves and chattels. The sweet religion of Christ proclaimed aloud the doctrine of the common fatherhood of God, and the universal brotherhood of men. Eighteen hundred years, however, went by, and the civilized world had not yet put its civil and political institutions in accord with its spiritual faith. The Christian church was all this time leavening human society, and patiently awaiting the promised fermentation. This came at last, and it came in

America. It came in a first manifestation through the Declaration of Independence; it came in a second and final manifestation through President Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation.

In America, all men are civilly and politically equal; all have the same rights; all wield the same arm of defense and of conquest, the suffrage; and the sole condition of rights and of power is simple manhood.

Liberty is the exemption from all restraint save that of the laws of justice and order; the exemption from submission to other men, except as they represent and enforce those laws. The divine gift of liberty to man is God's recognition of his greatness and his dignity. The sweetness of man's life and the power of growth lie in liberty. The loss of liberty is the loss of light and sunshine, the loss of life's best portion. Humanity, under the spell of heavenly memories, never ceased to dream of liberty, and to aspire to its possession. Now and then, here and there, its refreshing breezes caressed humanity's brow. But not until the republic of the West was born, not until the star-spangled banner rose toward the skies, was liberty caught up in humanity's embrace, and embodied in a great and abiding nation.

In America the government takes from the liberty of the citizen only so much as is necessary for the weal of the nation, which the citizen by his own act freely concedes. In America there are no masters, who govern in their own right, for their own interests, or at their own will. We have over us no Louis XIV., saying: "*L'état, c'est moi*"; no Hohenzollern, announcing that in his acts as sovereign he is responsible only to his conscience and to God. Ours is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. The government is our own organized will. There is no state above, or apart from the people. Rights begin with, and go upward from, the people. In other countries, even those apparently the most free, rights begin with and come downward from the state; the rights of citizens, the rights of the people, are concessions which have been painfully wrenched from the governing powers.

With Americans, whenever the organized government does not prove its grant, the liberty of the individual citizen is sacred and inviolable. Elsewhere there are governments called republics: universal suffrage constitutes the state: but once constituted the state is tyrannous and arbitrary, and invades at will private rights, and curtails at will individual liberty. One republic is liberty's native home—America.

The God-given mission of the republic of America is not only to its own people: it is to all the peoples of the earth, before whose eyes it is the symbol of human rights and human liberty, toward whom its flag flutters hopes of future happiness for themselves.

Is there not for Americans a meaning to the word country? Is there not for Americans reason to live for country, and, if need there be, to die for country? Is there not joy in the recollection that you have been her saviors, and glory in the name of America's "Loyal Legion"? Whatever the country patriotism is a duty: in America the duty is thrice sacred.

The duty of patriotism is the duty of justice and of gratitude. The country fosters and protects our dearest interests—our altars and hearthstones—*pro aris et focis*. Without it there is no safety for life or property, no opportunities of development and progress. All that the country is, she makes ours. We are wise of her wisdom, rich of her opulence, resplendent of her glory, strong of her fortitude. At once the prisoner Paul rose to eminence, and obtained respect from Palestinian Jews and Roman soldiers, when he proudly announced that he was a citizen of Rome—*Civis Romanus*. And to-day how significant, the world over, are the words: I am a citizen of America—*Civis Americanus*!

Duty to country is a duty of conscience, a duty to God. For country exists by natural divine right. It receives from God the authority needful for its life and work: its authority to command is divine. The apostle of Christ to the gentiles writes: "There is no power but from God, and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." The religion of patriotism

is not sufficiently considered : and, yet, it is this religion which gives to country its majesty, and to patriotism its sacredness and force.

As the part to the whole, so is the citizen to the country ; and this relation is the due measure of patriotism. The country and its interests are paramount to the citizen and his interests. A king of France, St. Louis, set to his device this motto : “ *Dieu, la France, et Marguerite.*” It told the order of allegiances : God first, next to God country, next to country family, oneself the last—the willing and generous chevalier, even unto death, of family, country, and God.

Allegiance to country is limited only by allegiance to God. God and His eternal laws of justice and righteousness are supreme, and hold first claims upon conscience. A country which exacts the violation of those laws, annuls its own moral authority, becomes an aggregation of human wills which physical force alone sustains. “ To God, that which is God’s ; to Cæsar, that which is Cæsar’s.” In olden paganism the state arrogated to itself supremacy in ethics as in temporals, and ruled consciences. Under this tyranny of the soul, freedom’s last ray vanished ; the last vestige of human dignity was effaced. Christ made men free ; He brought back the state to its proper orbit ; and, restoring truth upon earth, He restored manhood to man, and to country the effulgence of the skies.

It is fortunate for a people that from time to time supreme emergencies arise testing its patriotism to the highest pitch. If patriotism remains dormant for a long period, it may lessen in strength, while the reflection and self-consciousness which resolute action awakens result in a fuller estimate of the value of the country and institutions which it is the duty of patriotism to defend.

A supreme emergency did arise for the people of America.

There had been, indeed, patriotism intense and sublime in the revolutionary war, when

“ In their ragged regimentals  
Stood the old Continentals,  
Yielding not.”



But had this patriotism survived? Notable changes had come over the country. The population had been made much more eclectic; commerce and industry, usually unpropitious to sentiment and exaltation of soul, had engrossed the public mind; the spirit of democracy, in its workings toward individualism of character, might have unfitted the citizen for sacrifice in behalf of the general weal. I was in Europe when the civil war broke out, and I well remember the tone of the public press regarding the American situation. It was asserted that patriotism was unknown to Americans, and that a free government like ours, compelled to rely upon volunteer service, could not muster a large army of defenders. The proclamation of President Lincoln calling for 75,000 soldiers was received as the venturesome act of despair, and a quick dissolution of the Union was prophesied. At home there were not a few whose thoughts were those of the unfriendly Europeans.

On the morning of the twelfth day of April, in the memorable year of 1861, a cannon-ball swept over the waters of Charleston harbor, aimed with deadly intent at the star-spangled banner, floating above the walls of Sumter. War was declared against the country.

How much there was at stake! Scarcely can we at this moment recall without trepidation the awful significance of the contest.

At stake was the Union of the States, the strength and the life of the nation. What constitutes each State, from the Atlantic waters to those of the Pacific, strong, hopeful, palpitating with giant life and ready for giant progress? This only fact, that the States are one nation, and that, at home and abroad, one flag symbolizes them. A northern republic, a southern republic, a western republic—the nations would despise them. The republic of the United States—the nations fear and honor it.

At stake was the plenary recognition of human rights in our own country. In contradiction to the Declaration of Independence, men were held as slaves—fornsooth, because of color; in practice, America had failed as yet to be the ideal

country of manhood and human dignity. Had rebellion triumphed, slavery should have been confirmed, and the Declaration of Independence solemnly and permanently belied.

At stake was liberty for the world, the stability of a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. The Union disrupted, its shattered fragments prostrate over the land, as the broken and desolate columns of once famous temples in Grecian and Roman regions, liberty shrieking over the ruins should have hastened back to caverns of gloom, her friends abandoning hope, her enemies rejoicing and confident. The death of the Union implied a century of retrogression for humanity.

Deep and soul-rending was the ceaseless anxiety of freedom's sons during the dreary years of America's civil war. At every rising of the morning sun, the heavens were questioned—

“ O say, can you see by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming ?

“ O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave ? ”

O God of nations, we, this evening, thank thee : all was well : American patriotism was on guard : and the day came when, at Appomattox, one flag unfurled its beauteous folds over both contending armies :

“ 'T is the star-spangled banner : O long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave ! ”

Two things in our civil war amazed the world : one, the number and courage of our volunteer soldiers ; the other, the ability of the commanders. In other countries large standing armies, years of careful training for men and officers are the prerequisites of successful warfare. In America the chief executive of the republic waves his wand, and armies spring up as by incantation. One motive rules them, the saving of the country ; they are most daring in deed ; the leadership is most skilful. The records of their battles are studied in won-

derment by famed warriors of Europe. Especially, did the skilled leadership of our armies astonish Europeans. I met recently in Paris a well-known general of Russia. He said :

“War is a science of high degree ; at the commencement of the contest the Government of the United States had at its disposal only a handful of trained officers ; the war, moreover, was to offer in its varied operations unusual difficulties ; and yet, the command throughout the vast army was admirable in skill of planning and execution.”

Great the sacrifices which the war in defense of the country demanded ! But great the results ! No one now doubts that America is patriotic, and that a free people may be relied upon to defend its country. The United States is respected by the nations of the world ; they remember what it was capable of when divided ; they understand what it is capable of when united. The victory of the Union brought peace and prosperity to conquerors and to conquered ; to-day the conquered rejoice no less than the conquerors that the old flag has not lost one star from its azure ground. The seal of finality has been set upon the Union, the God of battle ending disputes, and deciding that we are a nation, one and indestructible. Slavery has been blotted out, and the escutcheon of free America is cleansed of blemish. Liberty is without peril in her chosen home, and from America's shores she sends her fragrant breathings across seas and oceans. The quickened march of republicanism and democracy which the present times witness through the Southern continent of America, and through Europe, goes out from the great heart of the triumphant republic of the United States.

The sacrifices ! Each one of you, Companions, says in truth : “ *Quorum pars magna fui.* ” The results ! They are yours, since the sacrifices were yours which purchased them. This great nation is your especial belonging : you saved it by the libation of your blood. By you the star-spangled banner was guarded, at the peril of your life, in its hour of trial : let others love it and seek its smiles : they cannot have for it your

passion, and, were speech allowed it, accents of sweetness would flow out to you which others should not hear.

The days of peace have come upon our fair land : the days when patriotism was a duty have not departed. What was saved by war must be preserved.

A government of the people, by the people, and for the people, as proposed by the founders of the republic, was, in the light of the facts of history, a stupendous experiment. The experiment has so far succeeded. A French publicist, De Maistre, once dismissed with contempt the argument drawn from the United States in favor of free institutions in Europe, remarking : "The republic of the United States is in its swathing-clothes ; let it grow : wait a century and you shall see." The republic has lived out a century ; it has lived out a mighty civil war, with no diminution, assuredly, of vigor and promise. Can we say, however, that it is beyond all the stages of an experiment ? The world at large is not willing to grant this conclusion : it tells us, even, that the republic is but now entering upon its crucial crisis. New conditions, indeed, confront us : new perils menace us, in a population bordering on the hundredth million and prepared quickly to leap beyond this figure, in plethoric and unwieldy urban conglomerations, in that unbridled luxury of living consequent on vast material prosperity, which in all times is a dreaded foe to liberty. It were reckless folly on our part to deny all force to the objections which are put to us.

Meanwhile, the destinies of numerous peoples are in the balance. They move toward liberty, as liberty is seen to reign undisturbed in America ; they recede toward absolutism and hereditary régimes, as clouds are seen darkening our sky. Civil, political, social happenings of America are watched, the world over, with intense anxiety, because of their supposed bearings upon the question of the practicability of popular government. A hundred times the thought pressed itself upon me, as I discussed in foreign countries the modern democracy, that, could Americans understand how much is made to depend upon the outcome of republican and democratic institutions in



their country, a new fire of patriotism, a new zeal in the welfare of the republic, would kindle within their hearts.

For my part, I have unwavering faith in the republic of America. I have faith in the providence of God and the progress of humanity: I will not believe that liberty is not a permanent gift, and it were not, if America fail. I have faith in the powerful and loyal national heart of America, which clings fast to liberty, and sooner or later rights wrongs, and up-roots evils. I have no fears. Clouds cross the heavens: soon a burst of sunlight dispels them. Different interests in society are out of joint with one another, and the society organism is feverish: it is simply the effort toward new adjustments; in a little while, there will be order and peace. Threatening social and political evils are near, and are seemingly gaining ground; the American people are conservatively patient; but ere long the national heart is roused and the evils, however formidable be their aspect, go down before the tread of an indignant people.

The safety of the republic lies in the vigilant and active patriotism of the American people.

There is a danger in the ignorance of voters. As a rule, the man who does not read and write intelligently, cannot vote intelligently. Americans understand the necessity of popular instruction, and spare no expense in spreading it. They cannot be too zealous in the matter. They need to have laws in every State, which will punish, as guilty of crime against the country, the parent who neglects to send his children to school.

There is a danger—and a most serious one—in corrupt morals. A people without good morals is incapable of self-government. At the basis of the proper exercise of the suffrage lie unselfishness and the spirit of sacrifice. A corrupt man is selfish; an appeal to duty finds no response in his conscience; he is incapable of the high-mindedness and generous acts which are the elements of patriotism; he is ready to sell the country for pelf or pleasure. Patriotism takes alarm at the spread of intemperance, lasciviousness, dishonesty, perjury; for country's



sake it should arm against those dire evils all the country's forces, its legislatures, its courts, and, above all else, public opinion. Materialism and the denial of a living, supreme God annihilate conscience, and break down the barriers to sensuality; they sow broadcast the seeds of moral death: they are fatal to liberty and social order. A people without a belief in God and a future life of the soul will not remain a free people. The age of the democracy must, for its own protection, be an age of religion.

Empires and monarchies rely upon sword and cannon; republics, upon the citizen's respect for law. Unless law be sacred a free government will not endure. Laws may be repealed through constitutional means, but while they are inscribed on the statute-book they should be observed. The lowering of the dignity of law, by deed, teaching, or connivance, is treason. Anarchical explosions, mob riots, lynchings, shake the pillars of the commonwealth; other violations of law, the determined defiance of municipal and State authority by the liquor traffic, the stealthy avoidance of payment of taxes and of customs duties, sear consciences, and beget a fatal habit of disobedience. A law-abiding people only is worthy of liberty and capable of guarding its treasures.

What shall I say of the purity of the ballot, of the integrity of the public official? I touch upon the life-threads of the republic, and words fail to express the solemnity of my thoughts. The poet Virgil places amid horrible torments in his hell the man "who sold his country for gold, and imposed upon it a master; who made and unmade laws for a price:"

*"Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem  
Imposuit; fixit leges pretio, atque refixit."*

The poet had a righteous sense of the enormity of the crime. The suffrage is the power of life or death over the state. The one licit motive in its use is the public weal, to which private and party interests should be always sacrificed. The voter making misuse of the trust deserves to be disfranchised; the man who compasses the misuse, who weaves schemes to defraud the

popular will, deserves to be proscribed. The public official is appointed for the people's good, and is sworn to work for it; if he prostitutes his office, legislative or executive, to enrich himself or his friends, he has "sold his country for gold," and he is a traitor. The distribution of office, or of administrative power, must be based on fitness; the spoils system in politics inevitably leads to public corruption, treacherous and unsafe administration, and the ultimate foundering of the ship of state.

Storms are passing over the land, arising from sectarian hatred, and nativist or foreign prejudices. These are scarcely to be heeded: they cannot last. Day by day the spirit of Americanism waxes strong; narrowness of thought, and unreasoning strife cannot resist its influences.

This country is America: only they who are loyal to her can be allowed to live under her flag; and they who are loyal to her may enjoy all her liberties and rights. Freedom of religion is accorded by the Constitution: religion is put outside State action, and most wisely so; therefore, the religion of a citizen must not be considered by voter or executive officer. The oath of allegiance to the country makes the man a citizen; if that allegiance is not plenary and supreme, he is false to his profession; if it is, he is an American. Discriminations and segregations, in civil or political matters, on lines of religion, of birthplace, or of race, or of language,—and, I add, or of color,—is un-American and wrong. Compel all to be Americans, in soul as well as in name; and then let the standard of their value be their American citizenship.

Who will say that there is no work for patriotism in days of peace? If it need not to be so courageous as in war, it needs to be more watchful and enduring: for the evils against which it contends in peace are more persevering, more stealthy in the advance, more delusive in the attack. We can easily imagine that a country, invincible in war, may go down to its ruin amid the luxuries and somnolence of prolonged peace. Hannibal won at Thrasymene, but he lost the fruits of victory in the vineyards and orange groves of Campania.

The days of war, many hope, are passing away for good, and arbitration is to take its place. This may be desirable: for war is terrible. Yet, it is not easy to see what is to be so serviceable, in electrifying the nation's patriotism, and communicating to it an ardor which refuses during many years to dim its glow. Certain it is that under the reign of peace we must, in season and out of season, look to the patriotism of the country, that it suffer no diminution in vigor and earnest work.

American patriotism is needed—patriotism intense, which speaks out in noble pride, with beating heart: *Civis Americanus*, "I am an American citizen"; patriotism active, which shows itself in deed and in sacrifice; patriotism public-spirited, which cares for the public weal as for the apple of the eye. Private personal civic virtue is not uncommon among us; more uncommon is public civic virtue, which watches the ballot and all approaches to it, which demands that public officials do their duty, which purifies public opinion on all matters where country is concerned. This patriotism will save the republic.

From whom primarily does the republic expect the patriotism? From her veteran soldiers.

This patriotism, America, thou shalt have. I speak for veterans. I speak for their brother citizens.

Noblest ship of state, sail thou on over billows and through storms, undaunted, imperishable. Of thee, I do not say: *Cæsarem vehis*—"thou carriest Cæsar." But of thee I say: *Libertatem vèhis*—"thou carriest Liberty." Within thy bulwarks the fair goddess is enthroned, holding in her hands the dreams and hopes of humanity. O, for her sake, guard well thyself! Sail thou on, peerless ship, safe from shoals and malign winds, ever strong in keel, ever beauteous in prow and canvas, ever guided by heaven's polar star. Sail thou on, I pray thee, undaunted and imperishable.

## SURRENDER OF THE NAVY YARD AT PENSACOLA, FLORIDA, JANUARY 12, 1861.

A paper read by Rear Admiral, HENRY ERBEN, U. S. Navy, Dec. 5, 1894.

ABOUT three years ago, I read before the United Service Club a paper upon a subject which I consider of importance, the time and correct date of the commencement of hostilities on the part of the South against the Union, and when the flag of the Union was first lowered, to make way for another. The paper was favorably received, and our Commander has asked me to read it before the Commandery. My papers are stowed away, and it is impossible for me to find it. I have prepared another, which, while it is not as full as the first, I take great pleasure in reading to you bearing in mind, your desire for brevity. In Dec., 1860, I was a lieutenant on board the U. S. Ship *Supply*. We had been for nearly a year with our squadron at Vera Cruz, watching the movements of the French fleet, which shortly afterwards landed its forces to prepare the way for Maximilian. It was hard service, so the Commodore sent us to Pensacola, to give the crew a run on shore as well as to get stores. We arrived December 7, 1860; the Presidential election had taken place, South Carolina was going out of the Union, and Major Anderson was hemmed in at Charleston. We found the people at Pensacola in a state of great excitement. Conventions had been called to secede the State; town meetings were being held every evening, where the most violent speeches were made to fire the Southern heart; men, women, and children seemed to have gone mad. Boats passing in gave us some choice greetings, informing us several times a day that we would all be blown to another place within

three months. We made fast to the Navy Yard wharf. The yard was commanded by Commodore James Armstrong, an old officer of very great distinction, who had stood by his colors for fifty years. The other officers of the yard were mostly Southerners, the executive officer was a New Jersey man, Commander Farrand,—we will hear more of him as we get on. The Navy Yard was well stocked with all kinds of stores and ammunition, to supply our large squadron in the Gulf of Mexico, watching the French. The ships at the yard were the *Fulton*, the fastest steamer in the service; the *Crusader*, commanded by John N. Maffitt, afterwards of the rebel cruiser *Florida*; the *Wyandotte*, Commander Berryman of Virginia; and the *Supply*, Captain Walke, also of Virginia. We attempted to give leave to our crew, but soon found that would not do; a fight of large proportions occurred, and several men were injured. Everybody was talking secession; we heard nothing else. Officers at the mess table, and at home, where the women always took a strong hand, the workmen during their midday-meal hour, even Jack took a hand, but his argument was all on one side, for the Union. Nothing was thought of or talked of but this infernal secession of the States. The excitement grew day by day, our mails from the north were interfered with, and toward the last cut off, I may say. The money sent from Washington was held somewhere, in fact we felt ourselves completely cut off, and that if we had a government, it had deserted us. No one knew what to do, the people at their meetings became more bold, open threats were made that the yard and forts would be taken, and large numbers of men were drilled in the open streets. Orders from Washington were asked for, but most likely these requests never got out of the State; at all events, no replies were received, until the Commodore got the ridiculous order to keep the Department advised as to what was going on, and to be vigilant in protecting the Government property. Another order came to Lieutenant Slemmer, commanding the company of artillery in Fort Barrancas, to move his command to Fort Pickens. This order came through the mail in a small pink envelope and addressed



in a woman's hand. At last it was necessary to take some action ; officers had to decide whether to go with their States, or to remain with the Union. Of all the Southern officers there, I will say I did not know one who wished to go out of the service ; most of them were forced out by family pressure, particularly by wives, mothers, or sisters. A classmate of mine and our assistant surgeon went up to the city of Pensacola for a day or so ; a secesh meeting took place at their hotel, the only hotel in town. Both officers were strong Union men, and thinking they could enter into a free discussion on the merits of secession, they went into the meeting room, which was of course the bar-room, but they soon found it was not a free discussion at all, but that they had a free fight on their hands. The next day they returned to their ships with blackened eyes and cut faces, a sorry-looking pair of defenders of the Union. Within ten days my classmate had thrown up his commission, taken himself off into Georgia, and fought all through the war in the Confederate navy ; this was but one of many similar cases. The *Crusader* with Maffitt got off to Mobile, leaving only the *Wyandotte* and *Supply*, the *Fulton* being hauled up for repairs. We in the *Supply* and *Wyandotte* got stores aboard, which, I may add, were given to us with great reluctance by the storekeeper, Mr. Gonzales ; even then, the amount was far below what we should have had ; we made ready to haul off from the yard, to defend it if ordered, at all events, to be off when the surrender came. Two forts stand at the entrance of Pensacola Harbor, Fort Pickens, one of the largest in the country, and Fort McCrea, in which a large quantity of ammunition was stored, which would be used by the rebels against Lieutenant Slemmer, should an attempt be made to occupy Fort Pickens. This fort commanded the fine harbor of Pensacola, which never fell into Confederate hands. No one would order the removal or the destruction of the ammunition, so I proposed to do it myself, and with a boat's crew pulled down the harbor and up the bayou to Fort McCrea. There was a sergeant in charge, but he was away, in town ; his wife came out, but refused to give

me the keys of the fort. It only required one word to the boat's crew, the doors were soon broken open and the work of destruction began. Several thousand pounds of powder were rolled out of the magazine, and the heads of the barrels were knocked in, and the powder tumbled into the sea. The fuses were thrown away, rope and other property destroyed, and the guns facing on Fort Pickens partly spiked, as well as we could do it; and when we left Fort McCrea, it was in no condition to prevent the landing of our force of artillerymen and sailors at Fort Pickens. Meanwhile the sergeant's wife got word out to the small towns near by of what was being done in Fort McCrea, and a party fully armed started in a boat to prevent the destruction, or to intercept us on our way out. It was dark when we got out of the bayou; we were pulling back to the ship when we met this boat. Those in it hailed us in not polite language; we rested on our oars, drifting with the tide, keeping perfectly quiet. Then came several shots from the boat; we pulled as I believe no other boat ever pulled before, reaching the ship, to find her away from the wharf in case of her services being needed, and so as not to be included in the impending surrender. I reported to Captain Walke what I had done, and about eight o'clock went up to the Commandant to ask permission to destroy everything in the Naval Magazine and Ordnance Department so that no warlike material might be found, which could be of service to the mob outside—threatening the Navy Yard. The Commandant had been informed of what had been done at Fort McCrea; he appeared to be completely dazed at my proposal to destroy this material; he read to me his order, "To be vigilant in protecting Government property," saying to me, "Now you ask me to destroy it." I did all I could to get his permission, but failed. He went to the parlor door, called his orderly, and sent him for Commander Farrand; then I knew it was all up. There was some violent talk after Farrand came; he asked the Commodore to put me under arrest, and send me back to the ship, that I was crazy, and had been disrespectful to him. The Commodore refused to do this; then Farrand rose, seized his

chair, threw it at my head, and left the room. I remained with the old Commodore for a while ; his face was buried in a handkerchief and he was crying like a child. I bade him good-night, and started for the ship. As I got out on the veranda, just closing the door, Farrand stepped up to me and in the most violent manner, shook his fist in my face, saying, "D—n you, I will teach you how to treat your superior officer." Thinking he would strike me, I seized him by the coat collar, shaking him off for a moment. He came at me again, we clinched and rolled down the steps together. I held him and said, "I will have you hung as a traitor." He called for assistance and Lieutenant Renshaw stepped out from the hedge ; my companion from the ship, the same man who got the black eye in town, came out from his hiding-place also. Farrand ran off in a state of rage, going to the officers' houses, saying, "Erben is drunk and wants to blow up the yard." Towards midnight, January 11th, we dropped down with the *Wyandotte* to take Captain Slemmer's command over to Fort Pickens. Lieutenant Gilman was the only commissioned officer with Slemmer, who had urged upon Commodore Armstrong the necessity of some plan to insure the safety of Government property, but Armstrong, after consulting with Farrand, deemed it inexpedient to do so. After valuable time had been lost, the Commodore agreed to assist, but at the very last moment this promised assistance was refused, then we knew we had to act on our own responsibility. Farrand even had an order given to the ships not to fire a gun unless the vessels were attacked, but no assistance was to be offered if Slemmer was attacked. I can say that no such order would have been obeyed, or even thought of, had Slemmer been attacked. The command, with all belonging to it, was put in boats, taken down the harbor in tow of the ship and landed, and when daylight came the rebels found Slemmer and the ships gone, our flag flying from the walls of Fort Pickens, and they knew they had lost control of the finest harbor in the South. Our flag never came down from that fort. The officers and men from the ships were sent on shore to assist in putting Fort Pickens in a state of de-

fense, but it was a large place to be defended by so few men. The troops of Alabama and Florida were marching on the Navy Yard,—mind you the troops of Alabama had invaded the sacred sand of Florida. We, in the ships, were ready and anxious to defend the yard, as were the marines stationed there. The Commodore thought a show of force might keep the rebels back ; extra sentinels were placed and doubled along the wall, with loaded muskets. A howitzer or two were placed near the gate and a great display made to intimidate the mob outside, but after nightfall Commander Farrand countermanded the Commodore's order, the marines were returned to their barracks, and the howitzers put away for further use in the Confederacy. Nothing was done to meet the force marching on the yard ; every man, woman, and child knew these troops were coming, and for what purpose. Florida seceded January 11th—vote 62 to 7. A little before noon, this force appeared before the Warrington gate, demanding the surrender of the yard, with threats of an assault in case of refusal. Farrand met their commanding officer, Capt. Victor M. Randolph, late of our navy, and conducted him to Commodore Armstrong. Terms were made to surrender the entire department, the officers, blue jackets, marines, and workmen to be paroled as prisoners of war, not to serve again against Alabama or Florida. At noon, on January 12, 1861, our flag was lowered for the first time, and another, the flag of Florida, hoisted in its stead. All the property, including vast quantities of stores of all kinds, with the *Fulton*, the Marine Barracks, and Naval Hospital with all in them, fell into the hands of the rebels. Gentlemen, if this was not war, what is war ? A great Government depot, its workshops, its million-dollar dry dock, all seized under threat of a large armed force, its people paroled, and sent off to the ships to be taken away, must be considered as the first act of the Great Rebellion. It was a fête day for Farrand, but a sad one to us, looking on from the ships. Farrand ordered an old quartermaster, named Conway, to haul down the flag. Conway refused, though threatened with cutting down ; then Lieutenant Renshaw with



his own hands hauled down the flag and Conway was put in irons. We heard a great deal about shooting on the spot any man who hauls down the American flag, yet no one was ever shot. This man Farrand most certainly should have been shot. I tried my best to have him tried for treason after the war was over, for while he was doing this rascally work he held a commander's commission in the navy. Three commissioners from the sovereign States of Alabama and Florida came to the ships under a flag of truce, demanding their surrender as part of the naval establishment; this, of course, was refused, for with the ships in rebel hands Slemmer would very soon have been driven out of Pickens, and then the rebels would have held the harbor; the same commissioners went to see Slemmer. On January 13th, the *Supply*, under a flag of truce, went to the anchorage off the yard, and received the paroled blue jackets, marines, people from the hospital, in all numbering over one hundred men, with all their effects. Captain Slemmer's command was very short of provisions—the three months' supply should have arrived from New Orleans by January 1st. We could not give him much from our small stock, with our increased number on board. We had noticed a schooner knocking about outside the bar, evidently with the stores on board. As soon as our flag was lowered she stood in for the harbor. I took a boat, went on board her with the crew; we seized the helm put it hard a-port, running her on the beach under our guns. She was the craft with the stores from New Orleans. The skipper swore tremendously at being captured, but our boatswain's mate, Walsh, knocked him overboard and so we secured the three months' rations for the troops. The garrison of Fort Pickens consisted of Company G, First Artillery, and thirty men sent from the ships; everything was done to help put the fort in a state to resist the threatened attack. There is no doubt this attack would have been made, had it not been for the *Supply* and *Wyandotte*. It was the intention to attack these vessels by boarding from protected river steamers, but the attempt was not made. The *Wyandotte* had but one officer—and on the *Supply* we were very uncertain as to some of



ours. Of the lieutenants, I was the only one to remain in the service.

The *Supply* sailed for New York with the warrant officers, surrendered men, and the wives of the officers, their furniture and baggage arriving on February 4, 1861.

For three months, this small force held this great fort, which would require seven or eight hundred men to properly man it; they were supported only by the *Wyandotte* with her crew, and the one officer, Captain Berryman, who, worn out by constant watching and work, died at his post in Pensacola. On February 6th, the *Brooklyn*, one of our new large sloops of war, appeared off the harbor, with reinforcements for Slemmer; these were not allowed to land, and the ship remained, rolling outside the bar, for weeks. Her presence, no doubt, gave courage, and relieved the little garrison of sailors and soldiers, of anxiety. Just think of it, the Government did not have backbone enough to order these troops, which had been sent purposely to reinforce Pickens, to land. The few supplies received by the garrison in some roundabout manner were cut off. The frigate *Sabine* also arrived shortly after the *Brooklyn*, but these vessels did not land their troops till April 13th, and then, as we understood it, the great responsibility of landing them on their own soil was taken by the senior naval officer present. This brought the strength of the garrison up to several hundred men, yet this not being thought sufficient, the celebrated Billy Wilson Zouaves were added. The *Wyandotte* having left the harbor, the rebels ferried themselves across the bay to Santa Rosa Island, where they landed, and made a furious attack upon the fort, but were driven off. The forts and Navy Yard were bombarded by Fort Pickens; some months later the yard, with buildings, dry dock, and all it contained, were fired and destroyed, and we took possession of the wreck.

It may be of interest to know what became of the officers present at this time. Commodore Armstrong was tried by court-martial for surrendering the yard, and was sentenced to five years' suspension. When I went to Washington in Sep-

tember, 1865, to see if it was possible to have Farrand arrested and tried as a traitor, I told the story of the surrender to the Secretary of the Navy, and shortly after, Armstrong was released, but Farrand was never tried; he joined the Confederacy, but never saw a battle, I am told.

Lieutenant Kell, of the Navy Yard, served on the *Alabama* with Semmes, from first to finish. Captain Walke of the *Supply* was tried by court-martial, for the Lord only knows what, and was under suspension when the war began; he made a fine reputation as a fighting man under Admirals Foote and Porter, on the Western rivers, and yet lives, a hale, hearty old man.

Berryman, as I said, died at Pensacola. Maffitt commanded the cruiser *Florida* for two years. Our executive officer resigned as a lieutenant in April, 1861, but did not join the Confederacy; he re-entered the service in 1863, as a mate I think, fought the rest of the war, and at its end, his commission as lieutenant-commander was restored to him, on his death-bed, by President Lincoln. One of the *Supply's* lieutenants, Bradford, went from New York to Cuba, to be married. I begged him to stay north, to go to China, or anywhere to get out of the way, but he went to Cuba, spent all his money and wrote home for more; he was told it would be sent him, provided he would go home to Alabama; he went, the women got hold of him, and he left the service; the next time I saw him, he was minus an arm, which he lost on the rebel ram *Tennessee* at Mobile, Ala.; his brother had commanded a company of troops from Alabama, at the surrender of Pensacola. I remember, when I was a witness in both Commodore Armstrong and Captain Walke's trials, I made use of the word "rebel" in my testimony. I was stopped, as the word was considered objectionable. I persisted in using it, for I knew no better one. The court was cleared, and the point deliberated, and I was told not to use the term again. Good heavens! after what we had gone through, what were we to call them?

Courts-martial appeared to be in order. I did not know but that my time might come to be tried for malicious mischief

in destroying public property, so I hurried off to sea, to get out of the way.

After serving on various stations during the war, it was my good fortune to be in command of a ship at this same Pensacola Navy Yard in June, 1865. A rather remarkable co-incident was that the Commandant then was James Armstrong, but another man than the one surrendering the yard,—and I was there to receive the rascals who drove us out four years before.

## THE CAVALRY AT CHANCELLORSVILLE, MAY, 1865.

Read by Capt. W. L. HEERMANCE, U. S. V., April 3, 1895.

AT a dinner of the Sons of the Revolution there met James E. Tucker, who, in 1863, was color-bearer of the 2d Virginia Cavalry, a regiment in Fitzhugh Lee's brigade, and the late Col. Floyd Clarkson, who had been a major in the 6th New York Cavalry. On the 30th of April, 1863, the latter regiment was surrounded by Gen. L. Lee's brigade, but, though outnumbered by a force treble his own, the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel McVicar, who was in command of the 6th New York, ordered a charge with sabres, and the greater number of those with him reached the main army at Chancellorsville, leaving only dead and wounded behind; among the former the brave McVicar, who, had his life been spared, would have made his record high among the dashing leaders of the Union cavalry.

Colonel Clarkson was not with the regiment at the time. Mr. Tucker, whose horse was shot under him in the engagement, was anxious to meet those who had participated in it, and Colonel Clarkson invited those who could be reached, to meet Mr. Tucker at his house, to talk over this and other engagements in which these two regiments had met each other, for the "Old Sixth" was well known to all the Confederate cavalry serving in Virginia; each having the respect for the other that brave men feel towards those they meet in battle where true manhood is shown.

It so happened that a short time before this, the writer was told that, living in the same suburb of New York with

him, was a Confederate officer, who had been in this engagement with the 6th New York, and received a sabre cut that nearly severed his nose from his face, and thought that his fellow townsman had been the offending party. And on my meeting Captain Benjamin F. Medina of the 5th Virginia Cavalry, it proved to be so. How strange it seemed that, after a lapse of more than twenty-seven years, he should tell me, in my own home, how in that wild charge in the woods of Virginia, at night, the officer that gave him that "right cut" was shot by Captain Reuben Boston of his regiment, almost at the same moment, and how Captain Boston was killed at the last fight of the war, near Appomattox. As he told his story it seemed there could be no mistake in his conclusion; for, as I was engaged with one on my right, before I could turn my horse to give the "left cut" to one who had a pistol that I could feel pressed against me, he fired, the ball going through my left arm and making a wound in my stomach; at the same time a blow on the head knocked me from my horse, and I was left behind to be taken to Libby Prison.

Captain Medina participated with us in the re-union of the "Blue and Gray," and the reminiscences awakened then have prompted me to write of this and other work done by the cavalry at Chancellorsville. However, before leaving the subject of this little gathering, where so much good feeling was shown by those who had often met in deadly strife, let me mention how we called to mind that as General Lee stopped at the little log-house where we were, the next morning, and learning that the body of the gallant leader of the little band, which had driven back his whole brigade, lay unburied on the field of battle, he had it brought in, a coffin made from the material that could be had, and buried it there, whence we afterward had it removed to its final resting-place in Rochester, New York. Such kindly feelings existing, with the loyalty expressed for the Union by those who had once fought against it, made all feel that sectional animosity would not have continued long had the men who did the fighting had the readjustment of affairs when the South laid down her arms.



A newspaper correspondent once being asked why so little mention was made of the work done by the cavalry in our civil war, tersely replied, "that they were generally so far to the front, and so near the enemy, that it was rather dangerous and—unpleasant to be with them." And this was the case at Chancellorsville. The reports of that engagement written since the war give but little attention to the work done by the cavalry at that time.

General Hooker, who was then commanding the Army of the Potomac, says: "The cavalry under General Pleasanton saved the army from annihilation." Upon entering the Chancellorsville campaign, General Hooker detached the cavalry, with the exception of the brigade commanded by General Pleasanton, and sent them under command of General Stoneman to make a raid on the enemy's line of communication. This command accomplished nothing. There were left with Pleasanton the 6th New York, 8th and 17th Pennsylvania regiments of cavalry, with Pennington's regular and Martin's volunteer batteries. As Stoneman's column moved out leaving us behind, we felt how unjust had been the detail that kept us from sharing in what all thought would bring so much glory to those who should ride with them; but the work done by our little brigade was the commencement of what gave our cavalry the name which has been unequalled by that of the cavalry of any other country.

In the advance to Chancellorsville I will follow only that part of my own regiment that led the advance of the Twelfth Corps, under General Slocum, which was the right wing of the army; the 8th Pennsylvania leading the advance of General Meade's column and the 17th Pennsylvania doing the same duty for General Howard, the remainder of the 6th New York being assigned to the divisions, but joining the cavalry command before the battle was over.

On Wednesday morning about two hundred of the 6th New York, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel McVicar, were ordered to report to General Slocum; we crossed the Rappahannock River at Kelley's Ford, and soon after were engaged

with a North Carolina cavalry regiment, driving them and taking some prisoners, among them a captain, whose lieutenant commanded the guard that a few days later escorted me to Richmond. The lieutenant remarked, when he found out that it was the same command that had captured his captain, "that the captain was in the habit of being taken without much trouble."

We skirmished all that day with cavalry in our front, reaching Germania Ford on the Rapidan late in the afternoon, a heavy force in rifle-pits on the other side preventing our crossing. We took possession of an old mill on the banks of the river, exchanging shots with them until the infantry came up, and a battery put in position shelled the rifle-pits, while the infantry crossed and captured all the defenders of the works. Crossing the ford we again took the advance, capturing some prisoners and baggage of the famous Black Horse Cavalry. We reached the Chancellorsville House Thursday afternoon, having been engaged more or less all the time since we started, with a loss of three men killed, one officer and five men wounded. Having reported our arrival to General Slocum, who was about three miles back, orders were received from him to go to Spottsylvania Court-House. Colonel McVicar knew full well from prisoners captured that the force we had skirmished with since crossing Kelly's Ford was vastly superior to ours, and that our advance, so far from support, would be attended with great risk, but as he told the officers with him what we were expected to do, he ordered the bugle to sound "Forward."

" His not to make reply,  
His not to reason why,  
His but to do and die."

As we marched on a few of the enemy were seen, but they fell back as we advanced; about dark, after marching through the woods, we reached a small clearing; the order to halt and dismount was given; a mounted guard was thrown out to the rear, and Captain Bell, with a few men, was sent

towards the Court-House. The men had been on almost continuous duty for forty-eight hours, and as they rested, holding their horses' bridles, most of them were lying asleep by the roadside. Captain Bell soon returned and reported that there was a heavy force at the Court-House; about the same time, the rear-guard was fired upon and driven in. The command sprang to their feet, and, mounting, very soon formed in line in the open field. It was now very dark, and there was some fear that some of our own troops had come up and, by mistake, had fired upon the rear-guard. Colonel McVicar sent Captain Goler back to ascertain the true state of affairs. Going back to the junction of the roads to Todds' Tavern and the Chancellorsville House, he was challenged, and on answering, "The 6th New York Cavalry," was fired upon and driven back to the main body. Sergeant Carroll was killed by the volley. As the enemy came down the road, which was only wide enough for a column of fours, our men formed in line, fired upon them, and checked their farther advance. Then Colonel McVicar ordered the command to draw sabre, break by fours to the right, and cut our way through. As our bugle sounded the charge, it was at the same moment sounded by the 5th Virginia, and the notes rang out clear and full in defiance of each other, as we rode down to where they waited for us. In the darkness, it seemed as though a sheet of fire belched forth from their carbines, and at this first fire the brave McVicar fell, and the rest of the command were mixed up with the Confederates as we rode through them. Besides Colonel McVicar, who was killed, three officers were wounded, and about twenty men killed and wounded. These were left behind, and the survivors drove the enemy until the cross-roads were reached, where the Confederates took the one to Todd's Tavern, and our men went on to our own lines at Chancellorsville. The wounded were taken to a house near where they fell, and after a few days were sent to Libby Prison.

I copy extracts from an article written for *Blackwood's Magazine*, published in 1866, at Edinburgh, by Major Heros Von Borche, who was chief of staff to General J. E. B. Stuart

at the time of the engagement, and received a bullet through his hat and had his horse shot through the head as we rode through the enemy's ranks. The extract commences at the time of Captain Goler being challenged.

"General Stuart dispatched Captain White of our staff, to Fitzhugh Lee with orders to send on one of his regiments as soon as possible and to follow slowly with the rest of his brigade. General Stuart and his staff were trotting along at the head of the column, when, at the moment of emerging out of the dark forest, we suddenly discovered in the open field before us, and at a distance of not more than a hundred and sixty yards, a line of hostile cavalry, who received us with a severe fire which concentrated on the narrow road. Fully conscious of our critical position, Stuart drew his sword and with his clear ringing voice, gave the order to attack, taking the lead himself. For once our horsemen refused to follow their gallant commander; they wavered under the thick storm of bullets; soon all discipline ceased, and in a few minutes the greater part of this splendid regiment, which had distinguished itself in so many battlefields, broke to the rear in utter confusion. At this moment the enemy's bugle sounded the charge, and a few seconds after we brunted the shock of the attack, which broke upon us like a thunder cloud, and bore our little band along with its vehement rush, as if driven by a mighty wave, sweeping us along with it, in the darkness of the forest."

During the night and next day, the scattered remnants of the regiment were brought together and re-formed within our lines. On Saturday afternoon, General Sickles, occupying a position near the right of the line, seeing Stonewall Jackson's flank movement, thought the Confederate Army was about to retreat, and called for the cavalry to help in their pursuit. What was left of the "Old Sixth" was deployed as skirmishers. When the heavy fighting gave the first indication that Howard's Eleventh Corps was being attacked, an aide-de-camp from him galloped up to General Pleasanton and asked for cavalry to check the enemy's advance until he could re-form his lines. Major Keenan, commanding the 8th Pennsylvania, was sent with his regiment to charge the head of the advancing column, while General Pleasanton put his batteries in position,

faced to the rear and double-shotted with canister, awaiting the appearance of the enemy. The 17th Pennsylvania and 6th New York were engaged in trying to arrest the wild flight of the demoralized Eleventh Corps, who in the greatest confusion were running over the batteries already in position; while more artillery was stopped and, with the help of the cavalry, given a field for action. General Sickles, seeing the danger, told General Pleasanton to hold his ground at all hazard until he could put his Third Corps in position to hold the ground which was the key to the position of the whole Union Army, for with Stonewall Jackson in possession of this elevation, he would not only be able to throw his shells into the headquarters at the Chancellorsville House, but from the rear pour an enfilading fire upon the entire army.

While this was going on, the 8th Pennsylvania, with Keenan riding at their head, charged on the advancing corps of Stonewall Jackson. Brave Keenan fell, sabre in hand, and scores of gallant troopers with him, but the advance was checked until Pleasanton and Sickles had completed the formation that was to turn back that advancing host; which without this check would have continued on and swept all before them and driven our army back to the Rapidan.

“ By the shrouded gleam of the western skies,  
Brave Keenan looked into Pleasanton's eyes  
For an instant, clear and cool and still;  
Then with a smile, he said: ‘ I will.’

“ ‘ Cavalry, charge!’ Not a man of them shrank,  
Their sharp, full cheer, from rank on rank,  
Rose joyously, with a willing breath,—  
Rose like a greeting hail to death.

“ And full in their midst rose Keenan, tall  
In the gloom, like a martyr awaiting his fall;  
While the circle-stroke of his sabre swung  
Round his head, like a halo there, luminous hung.

“ They raised no cheer—  
They have ceased, but their glory shall never cease,  
Nor their light be quenched in the light of peace.  
The rush of their charge is resounding still,  
That saved the army at Chancellorsville.”



As the enemy advanced, General Pleasanton gave the order to fire, and those twenty-two guns carried death and destruction into the enemy's ranks. Three times they charged, but they could not stand the hail-storm of shot, and fell back, leaving their dead and wounded. General Sickles's line was formed and the army saved.

From this time the cavalry played an important part in all movements of the Army of the Potomac. A few weeks later that tournament, with all of Stuart's cavalry in and about Brandy Station, followed by the cavalry engagement at Gettysburg, established its reputation, which later, under the leadership of General Sheridan, became known the world over. The following general order was issued after Chancellorsville :

"General Order, No. 27.

"Army of the Potomac,

"May 10, 1863.

"The General Commanding takes this occasion to commend the conduct of the 'Second Brigade' and Martin's 6th Independent New York Battery in the late engagement near Chancellorsville. The distinguished gallantry of the 8th Pennsylvania regiment in charging the head of the enemy's column advancing on the Eleventh Corps on the evening of the 2d inst.; the heroism of the 6th New York regiment in cutting its way back to our own lines, through treble its force of the enemy's cavalry, on the 1st inst.; and the coolness displayed by the 17th Pennsylvania regiment in rallying fugitives and supporting the batteries, including Martin's,—which repulsed the enemy's attack under Jackson,—on the evening of the 2d inst., have excited the highest admiration.

"These noble feats of arms recall the glorious days of Middletown, Boonsboro, Antietam, Martinsburg, Upperville, Barber's, and Amisville, where the First Brigade shared with us the triumphs of victory, and they will now, while exulting in this success, join in sorrow for the brave who have fallen. The gallant 'McVicar,' the generous 'Keenan,' with one hundred and fifty killed and wounded from your small numbers, attest to the terrible earnestness that animated the midnight conflict of the '2d of May.'

"A. PLEASANTON,

"W. L. HEERMANCE,

"Brigadier-General Commanding.

"Late Lieutenant-Colonel,

"6th New York Volunteer Cavalry."

## SOME PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF THE NAVAL SERVICE.

A Paper Read by Asst. Paymaster A. NOEL BLAKEMAN, late U. S. Navy,  
May 12, 1885.

PROBABLY no arm of the service during the Civil War afforded the opportunity for greater variety of experience than did the navy. Its ships were engaged in not a few great sea-fights, its forces were frequently an important factor in land operations, it maintained, with an efficiency that at first many thought would be impossible, a blockade of hundreds of miles of sea-coast, and it patrolled the high seas in chase of the enemy's ships and in search of contraband cargoes both inward and outward bound. The fight between the *Monitor* and *Merrimac* was the beginning of a revolution in naval construction and naval warfare. The heroic deeds of Farragut at Mobile, of Porter at New Orleans and Wilmington, of Rowan at Charleston, and of Foote upon the Mississippi have added a lustre to the renown of the U. S. Navy that will never dim so long as history is read and the great Republic stands. But while these were the great naval engagements of the war; there are many of lesser renown where equally brave men and equally gallant deeds led to important if not as great results. It is not my purpose to enter upon a description of any of the great naval events of the war in which I may have been a participant, or of which I may have been a spectator, but rather to give a few personal reminiscences in a vein that will perhaps afford more entertainment than would a more serious effort to deal with any of the great military achievements that characterized the struggle from 'sixty-one to 'sixty-five.

After serving three months with a militia regiment, in August, 1861, I received an appointment in the Volunteer Navy. Life on shipboard was not new to me. I had already spent two years before the mast and on the quarter deck of a merchantman; I had crossed the line, been properly shaved under the direction of old Neptune and eaten my share of hard tack and salt horse; and when I returned home in 1859 was considered a pretty well-seasoned young salt, fully capable of working up a day's reckoning, steering a trick at the wheel, handing the bunt of a topsail or passing a weather earing, and as handy with a palm as with a marline-spike. But, alas, steam and iron are fast displacing wind and wood, and it would seem that ere long the old shellback of thirty years ago will be a thing of the past, and a new kind of sea-dog will take his place. Only one thing is likely to remain the same, and that is the weather. The ship of to-day will have to encounter and battle with the same kind of weather, the same storms, the same calms, the same provoking head-winds, the same fair breezes. Old Ocean remains the same, but we will endeavor to conquer her in a different way.

As I look back over those early days of the war, I am reminded of the impressions I received of the gallant officers with whom I came in contact, who long since have passed away and are to-day numbered among our naval heroes. A man's peculiarities make up his individuality, and that these men had their's in any marked degree, not only goes to prove their strength of character but their fitness to be leaders among men. Let me briefly enumerate a few of those distinguished names, and the first I recall is that of Admiral Thos. K. Thatcher, then a captain, and in every sense a grand old sailor. Stiff and starchy in his manner as the enormous stock he always wore about his neck, quick in his enunciation yet always speaking with a commanding precision that made one feel that he meant to be obeyed. Then there was the benevolent and mild-mannered McKean, who at that time commanded the frigate *Niagara*. The big, big D was tabooed from that ship by his express commands, and when an officer

felt the necessity of using even a little D he quietly went to the ship's-side and out of respect to the flag-officer threw it overboard as quietly as he could ; but not always as quietly as he might have done, for echo often repeated it down on the lower deck. The best pictures, we are told, are made up of the strongest contrasts, and accordingly against these two men I would next mention Captain Louis M. Goldsborough. When I first came in contact with him he was in command of the old frigate *Congress*, then at anchor in Boston harbor. He was under orders to sail to Hampton Roads, but something had occurred to delay his departure, which evidently caused him much irritation. I happened to be in the office of the commandant of the yard, Captain William Hudson, when the ponderous Goldsborough came on shore for the purpose of straightening out his difficulties. We heard him talking to Commodore Hudson as though that officer had lost his hearing, and whenever the office door opened the air seemed tinged with the bluish tints of sulphurous smoke. We heard big D's and little D's. After his departure, the Commodore's secretary, the genial Jack Isaacs, quietly remarked that Goldsborough seemed to be a little ruffled. It struck me that the gallant old skipper was in a thundering rage, for he caused the timbers of the little building to quake as he strode about the office and hammered the floor with an unusually stout walking-stick, that he always carried on shore, while his ejaculations were to my mind neither calm nor peaceful ; but Isaacs assured me that what I had witnessed was as but a summer shower compared with what could be accomplished when the Goldsborough craft had all its ports down for action. A few months afterward, in Hampton Roads, I had an encounter with the Admiral that fully convinced me that Isaacs was right. And yet I have heard from those who knew him best that when so minded, there was no more genial and entertaining companion, with a keen sense of wit, and quick appreciation of a joke ; but my own experience never harmonized with any such description. Associated in my mind with Goldsborough is the fiery and peppery Max Woodhull, who never saw the funny side of anything,

dealt with everything as an actual reality, was nervous, easily excited, and seldom in a calm and collected frame of mind. During the early part of the war he commanded the supply steamer *Connecticut*, that made monthly trips, supplying with fresh provisions the blockading fleet from Hampton Roads to Galveston. On one occasion a paymaster for some reason had disputed and refused to sign his account. The fact had been reported to Woodhull, who thereupon began to prance about his cabin, and finally came rushing out just as I was innocently and respectfully opening the cabin door. "Leave the ship, sir!" he shouted, "Leave the ship, sir! I shall report you to the flag-officer." Quite unaware what all this meant, I was about to say that I was paymaster of the —. "I don't care who you are! Leave the ship at once!" and then apparently exhausted, he retreated to his sanctum. The sight of a paymaster that morning seemed to effect the Captain very much as a red flag does a bull, for every pay-officer that attempted to enter the cabin was taken to be the offender and treated accordingly. There are circumstances when a man is justified in losing his temper; as for instance when the afternoon practice of the band becomes so deafening that he cannot hear himself think, much less speak. Such a performance was in progress one afternoon in the harbor of Key West, when Admiral Lardner, after vainly endeavoring to communicate with his secretary, sent out a peremptory order that the band with their instruments should be thrown overboard.

I wish time permitted of my referring to the stately Dupont, the genial Spotts, the sea-sick Dahlgren, or that sturdy old sailor Commodore Hudson. I consider it a privilege, as well as an honor, to have served under them and to be able to speak of those I have enumerated as having been my commanding officers.

Some of the men who received appointments to the navy at the outbreak of the war had queer ideas upon the subject of uniform. One young man from Wisconsin who received an appointment as assistant paymaster marched into the Brooklyn Navy Yard one fine morning clad in the uniform of a full-rigged



captain of the navy. The guard at the gate had been turned out to salute him upon his entrance, and as he passed down the main avenue caps were touched right and left. Fortunately, before he reached the commandant's office, whither he was advancing under full sail to report, a few of us found out who and what he was, smuggled him into a side office, persuaded him to take off his coat, and with penknives ripped off the three broad bands of gold lace with which his sleeves were adorned. His look of amazement when informed that he had narrowly escaped the guard-house can be better imagined than described. He confessed that he had never seen a man-of-war, much less a naval officer. But his mistake was scarcely equal to that of a man from New Bedford, who although brought up at sea, upon receiving an appointment as acting master turned up at the Boston yard attired in a cavalry uniform, which he afterward informed me he purchased expressly for the occasion.

Before asking you to accompany me down upon the blockade, let me say a word respecting the gallant little craft in which we are to cruise. The *Kingfisher* was a taut, trim little bark, with the lines and sailing qualities of a yacht and the staunchness of a regularly built warship. She had been constructed for whaling in the arctic seas, and was among the first and best purchases made by the Government from the merchant marine. The after achievements of the gallant Worden in his Yankee cheese-box in Hampton Roads, and the revolution in naval architecture which has made steam and armor-plating the essentials of an efficient navy, impart a somewhat old-fashioned look to the *Kingfisher* at this distance; nevertheless, she was, twenty-four years ago, admirably adapted, with a battery of seven guns and crew of one hundred and thirty men, to the cruising service for which she was intended; and whenever the opportunity offered she never failed to give a good account of herself. In this taut little craft we came very near taking part in the capture of Mason and Slidell, but we did n't. The way of it was this. Bound for the Gulf, we put into Key West to replenish our supply of water, and found the steamer *Huntsville* commanded by Cicero Price with "Bully" Erben for Executive officer, in port, caulk-

ing ship, coaling, and repairing her boilers. While there the *San Jacinto*, Captain Wilkes, steamed into harbor, ostensibly for coal, but really in search of some one to assist him in the projected capture of Mason and Slidell. The three skippers, Wilkes, Price, and Couthouy, held a long conference on board the *San Jacinto*, and Wilkes used all his powers of persuasion to induce one or both to accompany him; but the *Huntsville* was not in a condition to go to sea and our captain was unwilling to deviate from his orders, so the *San Jacinto* and her officers had all the glory of that notable affair to themselves.

Blockading was not a very attractive service, but although it was not "so easy as it looks," it was far less monotonous than was generally supposed. True, much of the time we were in a condition of masterly inactivity, but then, like the renowned Major de Boots, we were always in a warlike attitude; and then we were constantly watching and waiting like Wilkins Micawber for "something to turn up," and whether that something proved to be the appearance of a blockade runner or a hostile demonstration from the enemy, we were always ready to fight or run, as prudence or necessity required. Our swords did not rust in their scabbards, nor were we without opportunity to test the range of our guns. Nevertheless, the pleasures of blockade service had to be experienced to be fully appreciated. There may have been an occasional spot of monotony here and there, but upon the average station the experience was as varied as it was exciting. An occasional skirmish on shore with an outlying picket of observation; a midnight alarm, which sometimes resulted in a beat to quarters merely to receive on board a boat-load of contrabands seeking refuge under cover of darkness on the "Lincum" gunboat; frequent dashes after blockade runners that somehow or other so often managed to elude our grasp; a cutting-out expedition that often resulted in the gallant capture of a very hostile fishing-smack; the destruction of salt works that increased in number the more they were destroyed; and, in the words of Uncle Remus, "laying low" for the monthly visit of the beef

boat, that brought our supplies of fresh meat, ice, blockade sherry, and our mail, made up a round of duty that could not be fairly termed monotonous. Then it afforded a splendid opportunity for the development and study of character as well as for the exercise of qualities that under other circumstances would not have been so prominently called into requisition. If you want to find out what a man really is, go and spend a year with him on the blockade and you will discover what kind of stuff he is made of as well as what kind of a fellow you are yourself.

One of the skirmishes we had on shore was a very neat little affair. While stationed in St. Helena Sound, off the coast of South Carolina, it was deemed necessary to capture a cavalry picket that kept watch of our movements. Accordingly a night expedition was organized. We landed about half a mile from the house where the enemy was quartered, and under the guidance of an old servant of the officer in charge, who had run away and taken refuge with us, we crept stealthily up to the point of attack. The picket numbered eighteen, our force twenty-seven. The house was surrounded without our being discovered. Three officers and the contraband walked up to the veranda and there saw the guard fast asleep, seated upon a chair. They took away his musket without awaking him, pushed the door, which was unfastened, gently open, went into the main room where the picket lay asleep upon the floor, and without raising an alarm deprived every man of his piece and carried them into the hall. As they were returning some one cried out, "Who's that?" The contraband promptly replied, "Me, Massa James," but the premature discharge of one of our muskets without, caused our whole force surrounding the house to open fire, ignoring the fact that their own officers were within. Fortunately the bullets did no harm, but the volley awoke the heavy sleepers; the man on the porch rushed in crying out that they were surrounded and his musket gone. Our officers stepped to the door and called upon them to surrender. Evidently dumbfounded at their position, they obeyed our order to fall in without resistance, were marched out of the

house and down to our boats, and were afloat before they fully recovered their senses.

One of the midnight alarms of which I have spoken, although a comical affair when viewed in the past, was no laughing matter at the time. We were blockading off the Mississippi at Pass Aloutre in company with the old side-wheel frigate *Mississippi*, commanded by the elder Selfridge. From day to day and night to night we watched for the appearance of an expedition that we understood was being fitted out in New Orleans for our destruction; but for days and weeks and months we watched in vain. Suddenly, one night between twelve and one o'clock, the much expected and welcome long roll of the drum caused every man to spring to his post. The enemy was upon us at last! We saw the occasional flash of his lights and distinctly heard the sound of his paddles, although they seemed to be a good distance off. The boarding nettings were triced down, and the Captain mounted the rigging to catch a better view, for the blackest of darkness prevailed. Every now and again he caught a glimpse of the light, but it did not seem to approach. The *Mississippi* signalled us to slip our anchor, and the splash of her paddles announced that she was under weigh. Still our skipper held on and all hands peered out into the darkness in breathless suspense. Both batteries were cast loose, with the starboard side manned, as the force of the tide laid that side next the shore. All at once there was an ominous thump against the ship's side. "Run out and fire!" shouted the Captain to the officer in charge of No. 1, and bang it went, followed by a scratching and catching of boat-hooks and a dozen voices shouting, "O Massa, don't shoot, don't shoot," "Don't hurt this nigger," "We wants to come aboard." We breathed more freely but those ten nigger boys were never more scared in their lives. Lanterns were brought, the nettings were raised, and ten sons of Ham scrambled over the side. After hiding in the marsh for four days they had ventured to pull off to the gunboat. The paddles we heard was the noise of their oars, the light we had watched so closely must have been a will-of-the-wisp, for they had neither lantern, candle,

nor matches. The retreat was sounded, we sheathed our swords and began to smile at our first encounter with the enemy. Meanwhile the *Mississippi* had been steaming about, expecting every minute to encounter an enemy. The discharge of our gun gave the impression that we were engaged at close quarters and accordingly she came to our assistance and learned the full particulars of our bloodless victory and capture. That expected expedition from New Orleans never came down, and when we left the station Porter, Farragut, and Butler had gone up the river to try and discover its whereabouts. The *Kingfisher* was not altogether unsuccessful in capturing prizes, and several of her chases were not altogether devoid of excitement, but a number of times she ran after those that were enabled to show us a clean pair of heels and we realized the truth of the adage that "a stern chase is a long one." But I am reminded that every good story must have an end and this yarn would seem to have already spun its proper length. What I have said may serve to inform you, companions, how we who were blockading employed the time.



## THE BATTLE OF ATLANTA.

Read by Major-General GRENVILLE M. DODGE, May 8, 1895.

ON the 17th of July, 1864, General John B. Hood relieved General Joseph E. Johnston in command of the Confederate Army in front of Atlanta, and on the 20th Hood opened an attack upon Sherman's right commanded by General Thomas. The attack was a failure and resulted in a great defeat to Hood's army and the disarrangement of all his plans.

On the evening of the 21st of July, General Sherman's army had closed up to within two miles of Atlanta, and on that day Force's brigade of Leggett's division of Blair's Seventeenth Army Corps carried a prominent hill, known as Bald or Leggett's Hill, that gave us a clear view of Atlanta, and placed that city within range of our guns. It was a strategic point, and unless the swing of our left was stopped it would dangerously interfere with Hood's communications towards the south. Hood fully appreciated this, and determined upon his celebrated attack in the rear of General Sherman's army.

On the 22d of July, the Army of the Tennessee was occupying the rebel intrenchments, its right resting very near the Howard House, south of the Augusta railroad, thence to Leggett's Hill, which had been carried by Force's assault on the evening of the 21st. From this hill, Giles A. Smith's division of the Seventeenth Army Corps stretched out southward on a road that occupied this ridge, with a weak flank in air. To strengthen this flank, by order of General McPherson I sent, on the evening of the 21st, one brigade of Fuller's division, the other being left at Decatur to protect our parked trains. Fuller camped his brigade about half a mile in the rear of the

extreme left and at right angles to Blair's lines and commanding the open ground and valley of the forks of Sugar Creek, a position that proved very strong in the battle. Fuller did not go into line, simply bivouacked, ready to respond to any call.

On the morning of the 22d of July, General McPherson called at my headquarters, and gave me verbal orders in relation to the movement of the Second, Sweeny's, Division of my, the Sixteenth, Corps, which had been crowded out of line by the contraction of our lines as we neared Atlanta; and told me that I was to take position on the left of the line that Blair had been instructed to occupy and intrench that morning, and cautioned me about protecting my flank very strongly. McPherson evidently thought that there would be trouble on that flank, for he rode out to examine it himself.

I moved Sweeny in the rear of our army, on the road leading from the Augusta railway, down the east branch of Sugar Creek, to near where it forks. Then turning west, the road crosses the west branch of Sugar Creek, just back where Fuller was camped, and passed up through a strip of woods and through Blair's lines near where his left was refused. Up this road Sweeny marched until he reached Fuller, when he halted, waiting until the line I had selected on Blair's proposed new left could be intrenched, so that at mid-day, July 22d, the position of the Army of the Tennessee was as follows: One division of the Fifteenth, across and north of the Augusta railway facing Atlanta, the balance of the Fifteenth and all the Seventeenth Corps behind intrenchments running south of the railway along a gentle ridge with a gentle slope and clear valley facing Atlanta in front and another clear valley in the rear. The Sixteenth Corps was resting on the road described, entirely in the rear of the Seventeenth and Fifteenth Corps and facing from Atlanta. To the left and left rear the country was heavily wooded. The enemy, therefore, was enabled, under cover of the forest, to approach close to the rear of our lines.

On the night of July 21st, Hood had transferred Hardee's

corps and two divisions of Wheeler's cavalry to our rear, going around our left which reached Decatur, where our trains were parked. At daylight, Stewart's and Cheatham's corps and the Georgia militia were withdrawn closer to Atlanta, and in a position to attack simultaneously with Hardee, the plan thus involving the destroying of the Army of the Tennessee by attacking it in rear and front, and the capturing of all its trains corralled at Decatur. Hardee's was the largest corps in Hood's army; and according to Hood, they were thus to move upon the Army of the Tennessee about 40,000 troops.

Hood's order of attack was for Hardee to form entirely in the rear of the Army of the Tennessee, but Hardee claims that he met Hood on the night of the 21st; that he was so late in moving his corps that they changed the plan of attack so that his left was to strike the Seventeenth Corps. He was to swing his right until he enveloped and attacked the rear of the Seventeenth and Fifteenth Corps.

Hood stood in one of the batteries of Atlanta, where he could see Blair's left and the front line of the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps. He says he was astonished to see the attack come on Blair's left instead of his rear, and charges his defeat to that fact, but Hardee, when he swung his right and came out into the open, found the Sixteenth Corps in line, in the rear of our army, and he was as much surprised to find us there, as our army was at the sudden attack in our rear. The driving back by the Sixteenth Corps of Hardee's, made his corps drift to the left and against Blair, not only to Blair's left, but his front and rear, so that what Hood declares was the cause of his failure was not Hardee's fault, as his attacks on the Sixteenth Corps were evidently determined, and fierce enough to relieve him from all blame in that matter.

The battle began exactly at 12 o'clock (noon) and lasted until midnight, and covered the ground from the Howard House, along the entire front of the Fifteenth (Logan's) Corps, the Seventeenth (Blair's), and on the front of the Sixteenth, which was formed in the rear of the army, and on to

Decatur, where Sprague's brigade of the Sixteenth Army Corps met and defeated Wheeler's cavalry—a distance of about seven miles.

The Army of the Tennessee had present on that day at Atlanta and Decatur about 26,000 men; 10,000 in the Fifteenth Army Corps, 9000 in the Sixteenth Corps, and 7000 in the Seventeenth. About 21,000 of these were in line of battle. Three brigades of the Sixteenth Corps being absent, only about 5000 men in a single line received the attack of the three divisions of Hardee's corps. Hardee's left, Cleburne's division, lapped the extreme left of Blair, and joined Cheat-ham's corps, which attacked Blair from the Atlanta front. According to Hood, they were joined by the Georgia militia under Smith extending down the line in front of the Fifteenth Corps. Stewart's corps occupied the works and held the lines in front of the rest of Sherman's grand army. The Sixteenth Army Corps fought in open ground; the Fifteenth and Seventeenth behind intrenchments.

Where I stood, just at the rear of the Sixteenth Army Corps, I could see the entire line of that Corps, and could look up and see the enemies' entire front as they emerged from the woods. I quickly saw that both of my flanks were overlapped by the enemy.

Knowing General McPherson was some two miles away, I sent a staff officer to General Giles A. Smith, requesting him to refuse his left and protect the gap between the Seventeenth Corps and my right, which he sent word he would do. Later, as the battle progressed, and I saw no movement on the part of General Smith, I sent another aide to inform him that the enemy was passing my right flank, which was nearly opposite his centre, and requested him to refuse his left immediately, or he would be cut off. This officer (who, by the way, belonged to the Signal Corps, and acted as my aide only for the time being) found, on reaching Smith, that he was just becoming engaged; that he had received orders to hold his line, with a promise that other troops would be thrown into the gap.

My second messenger, returning over the road upon which

McPherson was a few minutes later shot dead, met the General on the road with a very few attendants, turned to warn him of his dangerous position, assuring him that the enemy held the woods and were advancing. The General paying no heed to his warning, and moving on, my aide turned and followed him. They had proceeded but a short distance into the woods when a sharp command, "Halt," was heard from the skirmish line of the rebels. Without heeding the command, General McPherson and his party wheeled their horses, and at that moment a heavy volley was poured in, killing McPherson and so frightening the horses that they became unmanageable and plunged into the underbrush in different directions. My aide became separated from the General and the rest of the party, was knocked from his horse by coming in contact with a tree, and lay for some time in an unconscious condition on the ground. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered he returned on foot to me, having lost his horse and equipments. Of General McPherson he saw nothing after his fall. His watch, crushed by contact with the tree, was stopped at two minutes past 2 o'clock, which fixed the time of General McPherson's death.

General McPherson could not have left his point of observation more than a few minutes when I detected the enemy's advance in the woods some distance to my right, and between that flank and General Blair's rear. Fuller quickly changed front with a portion of his brigade to confront them, and pushing promptly to the attack, captured their skirmish line and drove back their main forces. Upon the persons of some of these prisoners we found McPherson's papers, field-glass, etc., which conveyed to me the first knowledge I had of his death, or rather, as I then supposed, of his capture by the enemy; and seeing that the papers were important I sent them by my chief of staff with all haste to General Sherman.

General McPherson, it seems, had just witnessed the decisive grapple of the Sixteenth Corps with the charging columns of the enemy, and, as probably conveying his own reflections at that moment, I quote the language of General Strong, the only staff officer present with him at that critical moment.



"The General and myself," said Strong, "accompanied only by our orderlies, rode on and took positions on the right of Dodge's line, and witnessed the desperate assaults of Hood's army.

"The divisions of Generals Fuller and Sweeny were formed in a single line of battle in the open fields, without cover of any kind (Fuller's division on the right), and were warmly engaged. The enemy, massed in columns three or four lines deep, moved out of the dense timber several hundred yards from General Dodge's position, and after gaining fairly the open fields, halted and opened a rapid fire upon the Sixteenth Corps. They, however, seemed surprised to find our infantry in line of battle, prepared for attack, and after facing for a few minutes the destructive fire from the divisions of Generals Fuller and Sweeny, fell back in disorder to the cover of the woods. Here, however, their lines were quickly re-formed, and they again advanced, evidently determined to carry the position.

"The scene at this time was grand and impressive. It seemed to us that every mounted officer of the attacking column was riding at the front of, or on the right or left of, the first line of battle. The regimental colors waved and fluttered in advance of the lines, and not a shot was fired by the rebel infantry, although the movement was covered by a heavy and well-directed fire from artillery, which was posted in the woods and on higher ground, and which enabled the guns to bear upon our troops with solid shot and shell, firing over the attacking column.

"It seemed impossible, however, for the enemy to face the sweeping, deadly fire from Fuller's and Sweeny's divisions, and the guns of the Fourteenth Ohio and Welker's batteries of the Sixteenth Corps fairly mowed great swaths in the advancing columns. They showed great steadiness, and closed up the gaps and preserved their alignments, but the iron and leaden hail which was poured upon them was too much for flesh and blood to stand, and, before reaching the centre of the open fields, the columns were broken up and thrown into great confusion. Taking advantage of this, Dodge with a portion of Fuller's and Sweeny's divisions, with bayonets fixed, charged the enemy and drove them back to the woods, taking many prisoners.

"General McPherson's admiration for the steadiness and determined bravery of the Sixteenth Corps was unbounded. General Dodge held the key to the position.

“Had the Sixteenth Corps given way the rebel army would have been in the rear of the Seventeenth and Fifteenth Corps, and would have swept like an avalanche over our supply trains, and the position of the Army of the Tennessee would have been very critical, although, without doubt, the result of the battle would have been in our favor, because the armies of the Cumberland and Ohio were close at hand, and the enemy would have been checked and routed farther on.”

General Blair in his official report of the battle says:

“I witnessed the first furious assault upon the Sixteenth Army Corps, and its prompt and gallant repulse. It was a fortunate circumstance for that whole army that the Sixteenth Army Corps occupied the position I have attempted to describe, at the moment of the attack, and although it does not become me to comment upon the brave conduct of the officers and men of that Corps, still I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration for the manner in which the Sixteenth Corps met and repulsed the repeated and persistent attacks of the enemy.

“The Sixteenth Corps has a record in that battle which we seldom see in the annals of war. It met the shock of battle and fired the last shot late that night, as the enemy stubbornly yielded its grasp on Bald Hill. It fought on four parts of the field, and everywhere with equal success; it lost no gun that it took into the engagement, and its losses were almost entirely in killed and wounded—the missing having been captured at Decatur through getting mired in a swamp.

“At no time during the Atlanta campaign was there present in the Sixteenth Corps more than two small divisions of three brigades each, and at this time these two divisions were widely scattered; on the Atlanta field only ten regiments and two batteries were present, three entire brigades being absent from the corps. It was called upon to meet the assault of at least three divisions or nine brigades, or at the least forty-nine regiments, all full to the utmost that a desperate emergency could swell them, impelled by the motive of the preconcerted surprise, and orders from their commander at all hazards to sweep over any and all obstructions; while, on the other hand, the force attacked and surprised was fighting without orders,

guided only by the exigency of the moment. Their captures represented forty-nine different regiments of the enemy. How many more regiments were included in those nine brigades I have never been able to learn. The fact that this small force, technically, if not actually, in march, in a perfectly open field, with this enormously superior force leaping upon them from the cover of dense woods, was able to hold its ground and drive its assailants, pell-mell, back to the cover of the woods again, proves that when a great battle is in progress, or a great emergency occurs, no officer can tell what the result may be when he throws in his forces, be they 5000 or 20,000 men ; and it seems to me to be impossible to draw the line that gives the right to a subordinate officer to use his own judgment in engaging an enemy when a great battle is within his hearing.

“Suppose the Sixteenth Corps, with less than 5000 men, seeing at least three times their number in their front, should have retreated, instead of standing and fighting as it did, what would have been the result ? I say, that in all my experience in life, until the two forces struck and the Sixteenth Corps stood firm, I never passed more anxious moments.

“Sprague’s brigade, of the same corps, was engaged at the same time within hearing, but on a different field, at Decatur, fighting and stubbornly holding that place, knowing that if he failed the trains massed there and *en route* from Roswell, would be captured. His fight was a gallant and, sometimes, seemingly almost hopeless one—giving ground inch by inch, until, finally, he obtained a position that he could not be driven from, and one that protected the entire trains of the army.”

As Hardee’s attack fell upon the Sixteenth Army Corps, his left division (Cleburne’s) lapped over and beyond Blair’s left, and swung around his left front ; they poured down through the gap between the left of the Seventeenth and the right of the Sixteenth Corps, taking Blair in front, flank, and rear. Cheatham’s corps moved out of Atlanta and attacked in Blair’s front. General Giles A. Smith commanded Blair’s left division, his right connecting with Leggett at Bald Hill, where Leggett’s division held the line until they connected with the Fifteenth Corps, and along this front the battle raged with great fury.

As they advanced along the open space between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps, they cut off from Blair's left and captured an entire regiment of his command, and forced the Seventeenth Corps to form new lines, utilizing the old intrenchments thrown up by the enemy, fighting first on one side and then on the other, as the attack would come, from Hardee in the rear or Cheatham in the front, until about 3.30 P.M., when evidently, after a lull, an extraordinary effort was made by the rebels to wipe out Giles A. Smith's division and capture Leggett's Hill, the enemy approaching under cover of the woods until they were within fifty yards of Smith's temporary position, when they pressed forward until the fight became a hand-to-hand conflict across the trenches occupied by Smith, the troops using bayonets freely and the officers their swords. This attack failed ; it was no doubt timed to occur at the same time that Cheatham's corps attacked from the Atlanta front, which Leggett met. The brunt of Cheatham's attack was against Leggett's Hill, the key to the position of that portion of the Army of the Tennessee. General Smith's division had to give up the works they occupied, and fall into line at right angles with Leggett's division, Leggett's Hill being the apex of the formation ; and here, for three quarters of an hour, more desperate fighting was done around this position than I can describe. Up to midnight the enemy occupied one side of the works while we occupied the other, neither side giving way until Hood saw that the whole attack was a failure, when those who were on the outside of the works finally surrendered to us. Their attack at this angle was a determined and resolute one, advancing up to our breastworks on the crest of the hill, planting their flag side by side with ours, and fighting hand to hand until it grew so dark that nothing could be seen but the flash of the guns from the opposite side of the works. The ground covered by these attacks was literally strewn with the dead of both sides. The loss of Blair's corps was 1801, killed, wounded, and missing. Blair's left, struck in the rear, flank, and front, gave way slowly, gradually, fighting for every inch of ground, until their left was opposite the right

flank of the Sixteenth Corps; then they halted and held the enemy, refusing to give another inch.

It would be difficult, in all the annals of war, to find a parallel to the fighting of the Seventeenth Corps; first from one side of its works and then from another, one incident of which was that of Colonel Belknap, of the Union side, reaching over the works, seizing the colonel of the 45th Alabama, and drawing him over the breastworks, making him a prisoner of war.

About 4 P.M., Cheatham's corps and the Georgia militia were ordered by Hood to again attack. They directed their assault this time to the front of the Fifteenth Corps, using the Decatur wagon road and railway as a guide, and came forward in solid masses, meeting no success until they slipped through to the rear of the Fifteenth Corps by a deep cut used by the railway passing through our intrenchments.

As soon as they reached our rear, Lightburn's division of the Fifteenth Corps became partially panic-stricken, and fell back, giving up the intrenchments for the whole front of this division, the enemy capturing the celebrated Degress Battery of 20-pounders and two guns in advance of our lines. The officers of Lightburn's division rallied it in the line of intrenchments, just in the rear, where they had moved from in the morning.

General Logan was then in command of the Army of the Tennessee; he rode over to where I was, and I sent Mersey's brigade of the 2d Division, under the guidance of Major Edward Jonas, my aide-de-camp, to the aid of the Fifteenth Corps.

Of the performance of that brigade on that occasion, I quote the words of that staff officer, Major Jonas:

"I conducted Mersey's brigade to the point where needed; arrived at the railroad, he at once deployed and charged, all men of the Fifteenth Corps at hand joining with him. Mersey's brigade recaptured the works and the guns. Old Colonel M. was slightly wounded, and his celebrated horse 'Billy' killed. By your direction I said to General Morgan L. Smith (temporarily in command of



the Fifteenth Corps) : ' General Dodge requests that you return this brigade at the earliest practicable moment, as there is every indication of renewed assault on our own line,' and, after saying that your request would be respected, General Smith added : ' Tell General Dodge that his brigade (Mersey's) has done magnificently, and that it shall have full credit in my report.' "

Afterwards, one of Mersey's officers—Captain Boyd, I think—in trying his skill as an artillerist, cracked one of the recaptured guns.

In this battle Colonel Mersey and many of his men, whom he so gallantly led, had served their time, and were awaiting transportation home. Eloquent words have been written and spoken all over the land in behalf of the honor, of the bravery of the soldier, but where is the word spoken or written that can say more for the soldier than the action of these men on that field? They were out of service, they had written that they were coming home, and their eyes and hearts were toward the North ; many an anxious eye was looking for the boy who voluntarily laid down his life that day ; and many a devoted father, mother, or sister has had untold trouble to obtain recognition in the War Department because the soldier's time had expired. He was mustered out, waiting to go home, and was not known on the records ; but on that day he fought on three different parts of that field, without a thought except for his cause and his country. General Sherman had discovered the breach in the Fifteenth Corps' line. Chas. R. Wood's division of the Fifteenth Corps, which was in the intrenchments north of the railway, was formed in echelon, by his order, General James A. Williamson's brigade in advance. They moved at the same time that Lightburn and Mersey attacked from the rear, Wood's division being on the flank ; and the combined forces soon retook the line and the battery, and thereafter held it.

The continuous attacks of Cheatham made no other impressions on the line. Our men were behind the intrenchments and the slaughter of the enemy was something fearful. Gen-

eral J. C. Brown who commanded the Confederate division that broke through our line told me that after breaking through it was impossible to force his men forward ; the fire on their flanks and front was so terrific that when driven out of the works one half of his command was killed, wounded, or missing. The Confederate records sustain this and it is a wonder that they could force their line so often up to within 100 to 300 feet of us where our fire would drive them back, in spite of the efforts of their officers, a great many of whom fell in these attacks.

I could see the terrific fighting at Leggett's Hill, but along the line of the Fifteenth Corps, I can only speak of as shown by the records, and as told me by General John C. Brown of the Confederate Army. The stubbornness and coolness with which they contested every inch of the ground won his admiration, and the manner and method with which the line was retaken, must have been seen to be appreciated.

When dark fell upon us the enemy had retired, except around the angle in the Seventeenth Corps, known as Leggett's or Bald Hill. Here there was a continuous fire, desultory and at close quarters, the enemy in places occupying ground close up to our intrenchments ; and to relieve these men of the Seventeenth Army Corps holding this angle who were worn out, at the request of General Blair I sent two regiments of Mersey's brigade. They crawled in on their hands and knees, and swept the enemy from that front.

The whole of Hood's Army except Stewart's corps, was thrown into our rear upon the flank and front of the Army of the Tennessee, and after fighting from mid-day until dark were repulsed and driven back, and that army held or commanded the entire battle-field, demonstrating the fact that the Army of the Tennessee alone was able and competent to meet and defeat Hood's entire army. The battle fell almost entirely upon the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps and two divisions of the Fifteenth Corps, three brigades of the Sixteenth being absent. The attack of the enemy was made along this line some seven times, and they were seven times repulsed.

We captured 18 stands of colors—5000 stands of arms—2017 prisoners. We lost in killed and wounded 3521 men—10 pieces of artillery and over 1800 men, mostly from Blair's Corps, were taken prisoners. The enemy's dead reported as buried in front of the different corps, was over 2000 and the enemy's total loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners was 8000.

The criticism has often been made of this battle that with two armies idle that day, one the Army of the Ohio (two thirds as large as the Army of the Tennessee), the other the Army of the Cumberland (the largest of all Sherman's armies), why we did not enter Atlanta? General Sherman urged Thomas to make the attack. Thomas's answer was, that the enemy were in full force behind his intrenchments. The fact was Stewart's corps was guarding that front, but General Schofield urged Sherman to allow him to throw his army upon Cheatham's flank, and endeavor to roll up the Confederate line, and so interpose between Atlanta and Cheatham's corps, which were so persistently attacking the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps from the Atlanta front. Sherman, whose anxiety had been very great, seeing how successfully we were meeting the attack, his face relaxing into a pleasant smile, said to Schofield, "Let the Army of the Tennessee fight it out this time." This flank attack of Schofield on Cheatham would have no doubt cleared our front facing the Atlanta intrenchments but Stewart was ready with his three divisions to hold the Atlanta intrenchments.

General Sherman, in speaking of this battle, always regretted that he did not allow Schofield to attack as he suggested, and also force the fighting on Thomas's front, but no doubt the loss of McPherson really took his attention from everything except the Army of the Tennessee.

At about ten o'clock on the night of the 22d, the three corps commanders of the Army of the Tennessee (one of them in command of the army) met in the rear of the Fifteenth Corps, on the lines of the Decatur road, under an oak tree, and there discussed the results of the day. Blair's men were at the time in the trenches; in some places the enemy held one side and

they the other; the men of the Fifteenth Corps were still in their own line, but tired and hungry, and those of the Sixteenth were, after their hard day's fight, busy throwing up intrenchments on the field they had held and won. It was thought that the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Ohio, which had not been engaged that day, should send a force to relieve Blair. Dodge being the junior corps commander, was dispatched by General Logan, at the requests of Generals Logan and Blair, to see General Sherman. My impression is that I met him in a tent; I have heard it said that he had his headquarters in a house. When I met him he seemed rather surprised to see me, but greeted me cordially, and spoke of the loss of McPherson. I stated to him my errand. He turned upon me and said: "Dodge, you whipped them to-day, didn't you?" I said, "Yes, sir." Then he said: "Can't you do it again to-morrow?" and I said, "Yes, sir," bade him good night, and went back to my command, determined never to go upon another such errand. As he explained it afterward, he wanted it said that the little Army of the Tennessee had fought the great battle that day, needing no help, no aid, and that it could be said that all alone it had whipped the whole of Hood's army. Therefore he let us hold our position and our line, knowing that Hood would not dare attack us after the "thrashing" he had already received. When we consider that in this, the greatest battle of the campaign, the little Army of the Tennessee met the entire rebel army, secretly thrust to its rear, upon its flank and advanced centre, with its idolized commander killed in the first shock of battle, and at nightfall found the enemy's dead and wounded on its front, showing that no disaster, no temporary rebuff could discourage this army, every man at his post, every man doing a hero's duty, the conclusion is irresistible that they might be wiped out but never made to run; or in other words that they were invincible.

Companions, regarding so great a battle, against such odds, with such loss, the question has often been asked me—and I know it has come to the mind of all of us—why it was that this battle was never put forth ahead of many others its in-

ferior, but better known to the world and made of much greater comment?

The answer comes to all of us. It is as apparent to us to-day as it was that night. We had lost our best friend, that superb soldier, our commander, General McPherson; his death, counted so much more to us than victory, that we spoke of our battle, our great success, with our loss uppermost in our minds.



## THE NAVAL VICTORY AT PORT ROYAL, S. C.

November 7, 1861.

By Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel WM. CONANT CHURCH. Read at the Meeting of the N. Y. Commandery, October 2, 1895.

DURING the early months of 1861, when the dark clouds were gathering over our native land, I was travelling in Europe, and in March of that year was visiting the palaces of Genoa, sampling Italian wines in company with John B. Magruder, then Captain and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel 1st U. S. Artillery, and listening to his stories of adventures in which, I regret to say, Venus bore a more important part than Mars. On my return to the United States in July, I availed myself of the first opportunity to take part in the war, and joined as a volunteer the military expedition then organizing under General Thomas W. Sherman, for a descent upon some point of the Southern coast not yet determined upon. The organization of this expedition was in pursuance of what was known as General Scott's "Anaconda Policy," designed to involve the Confederacy in the coils of the Grand Army, by surrounding it on all sides, and then to crush the life out of it.

No one who took part in such an expedition as that against Port Royal, could fail to realize the gigantic nature of the task General Scott had imposed upon himself. The difficulties attending the organization of a body of twelve thousand men, securing transportation and supplies for them, and carrying them over the uncertain waters of the sea to their final destination on the Southern coast, required the utmost efforts of all in command.

The demand for troops in all directions was so great that

General Sherman had difficulty in obtaining the forces he needed, and by the time the fifty sail required for the transportation of his troops had gathered at Annapolis, days had lengthened into weeks, and weeks into months. The preliminary orders were received early in August by General Sherman, and his coadjutor of the navy, Captain (afterwards Rear-Admiral) Samuel F. Dupont, but the expedition did not move until the 18th of October. Meanwhile the troops were gathered in camp at Annapolis, Md., and in the harbor of that city was assembled as variegated a fleet as ever set sail upon the sea. There were vessels of every sort, from the four-masted *Great Republic*, then the leviathan of the ocean, and the caloric steamer *Ericsson* with her four smoke-stacks, down to the spiteful little tugs and wheezy double-ender ferry boats from the North and East rivers, the sight of which made a New Yorker feel entirely at home.

On Friday, October 18, 1861, Sherman's troops began to embark, and by Sunday night they and their belongings were ready for the sea. Then they proceeded from Annapolis to Hampton Roads, where, after lying for a tedious week cooped up on board their several vessels, they set sail under convoy of Dupont's fleet of fourteen war-vessels, one hundred and thirty guns, towards the South, every man resolved to do and die for his country and her cause.

No one knew where we were going, not even the subordinate officers of the expedition, for we proceeded under sealed orders. We only knew that we were to make a descent somewhere on the Southern coast, the general opinion inclining to Charleston. Having facilities for obtaining information, which involved the suspicion of treachery at Washington, the Confederates discovered the secret of our destination sooner than we did, and reported that our attack would be directed against Port Royal.

The expedition finally got under way on October 29th. The *Baltic*, a vessel of the old Collins line, to which I was attached, carried a brigade-commander, H. G. Wright, and a regiment of New Hampshire troops commanded by Colonel Tom

Whipple. Colonel Tom was the hero of the story of the chaplain who came to him one day and told him there had been a great work of grace in the adjoining camp and five men had been baptized. Calling his adjutant, Whipple immediately gave him orders to detail ten men for baptism the next morning saying that "he would be damned if he would let any other regiment in that brigade get ahead of him." Whipple was only one of the host of jolly good fellows who had assembled on board the *Baltic*. Among those I recollect, in addition to General Wright, and other dignitaries of the expedition, was a young man named Hubbell, now Captain Henry W. Hubbell, of the 1st Artillery, and a member of this Commandery; there was Herbert A. Hascall, also of the artillery, whose fine mind subsequently became a wreck; there was Weld, afterwards a Massachusetts general officer; there was Grant, later the head of the "Grant Locomotive Works"; and Frances P. Bangs, subsequently a leader of the New York Bar.

I mention these names to show that I am not mistaken in my recollection that we had an uncommonly bright set of fellows in the society we organized on board the *Baltic*, known as the "Society for the Confusion of Useless Knowledge." The demand of the sea for tribute from the novices, while it did not disturb the *harmony* of our society's proceedings, did interfere to some extent with their continuity.

On the second night out we were aroused from our slumbers by a singular rolling motion of the vessel, such as one who has experienced it never forgets. This was followed in an instant by a sudden stoppage, which threw us from our berths and sent a quiver through every fibre of that staunch steamer, warning us of some great danger, we scarcely knew what. Then another thump and another shock, and quick ran the report from forecabin to cabin "The ship's ashore!"

A current of unforeseen strength had drifted us inland, and while we—the passengers at least—supposed ourselves to be safely to the southward of Cape Hatteras, we were steering straight on to Hatteras's outer shoal, where we struck, head on, early Thursday morning, October 31, 1861.

A few moments before the vessel grounded, the officer of the deck was led by the appearance of the water to suspect the vicinity of breakers, and almost at the instant of the collision he had ordered the engines reversed. In the twinkling of an eye Captain Comstock was at his post, and remembering the vessel bearing down upon our stern sang out :

“Cut away the hawsers aft !” Then, “Get out your signal guns !”

Quick as the order was given to cut adrift the vessel we were towing, the sharp sailor instinct of several on board had anticipated it, and one or two were already at the hawser, axe in hand. The cable parted, the *Ocean Express* promptly put her helm hard a-starboard, and bore down past us almost within arm's reach. This danger escaped, the *Baltic*, with engines reversed, drew away from the treacherous shoal, that had so nearly compassed her destruction. The quiet night, the slow rate at which we were steaming, and the prompt action of our officers, alone saved the vessel. The lead was thrown when the ship had gone a length or two, and seven fathoms were announced, next ten, and in another moment we were swimming in deep water again. Notwithstanding the heavy shock she had experienced not a timber of the sturdy ship was displaced, and the cheering report, “No water in the hold,” was soon brought to the deck to relieve our anxious fears.

But there was still another danger: All on board were now awake to our peril, and while the cabin passengers, the officers of the regiment, and others hurried to the deck, shivering in scanty clothing, a thousand soldiers, equally strong in their instinct for life, were struggling up from the hold to spread confusion through the vessel, at the moment when everything depended upon perfect coolness, unembarrassed action, and prompt obedience to orders. Though the command was given for every man to remain below, the sentries were powerless to restrain the surging multitude, and it is impossible to say what might have resulted had it not been for the vigorous action of Lieutenant Richardson, the officer of the guard, who was fortunately not only an old sailor but a man equal to the emergency.

Directing the sentinels to cut down every one who attempted to pass, he stationed himself with a revolver at the head of the companion-way, before the dense mass of struggling men, threatening to shoot down the first who refused to obey orders; at the same time assuring the anxious soldiers that there was no danger except in their own disregard of the orders to remain quiet.

We had a little Englishman on board named Edge, correspondent of the *London Standard*, who, with sarcastic reference to the superstitions of the time concerning masked batteries, accounted for our adventure on the theory that we had run up against one of the enemy's "masked shoals." Meanwhile we consoled ourselves for the little *contre temps* by the classical reflection that since the Greeks met with a similar mishap on their way to the conquest of Troy, it could not argue anything against the final success of the expedition.

With daylight came the discovery that worse mishaps had befallen other vessels, though our tow, the *Ocean Express*, in which we were chiefly interested, had received no other injury than what her captain had emphatically announced through his trumpet as having "lost forty-five fathoms of chain cable and knocked hell out of her windlass." Other vessels were no doubt turned from the danger by the warning lights we sent up from the *Baltic*, but the *Illinois* narrowly escaped a similar fortune, having had one smoke-stack carried away and received other trifling injuries from the collision with a vessel she was towing, while bringing up suddenly to escape the shoal ahead. We soon had further occasion to note the power of the sea, when a furious storm on the succeeding afternoon scattered Dupont's fleet over a wide area of ocean, sinking some, driving others on to the enemy's coast and compelling the flag officer to delay action until he could gather his dispersed vessels together, some of them coming into Port Royal harbor limping painfully from the injuries they had received.

The poor New Hampshire boys of Whipple's regiment imprisoned below were left to imagine unknown terrors in the howling storm and the buffeting waves which seemed each



moment about to rend the trembling and groaning vessel into a thousand fragments.

A beautiful day followed, with soft and balmy air, and from the near shore of Carolina the bright-winged butterflies came floating out to the ships, to tell the frostbitten Northerners of the summer which still lingered there. In the afternoon the gunboats accompanying us had a brush with three of Tatnall's small rebel steamers, which came down Broad River, from the direction of Savannah, and opened fire from a safe distance. It was five o'clock when the first gun was sounded, and during the hour the twilight lasted the decks of the transports, lying three or four miles outside of the warships, were crowded with officers and men careering the vessels far over to the starboard ; all eagerly watching the fight of which we could see nothing more than the flashing of the guns succeeding one another at different points at intervals of a minute or less. The insignificance of the affair we did not understand until the following day. During Monday, November 5th, and Tuesday following we laid quiet while a reconnoissance was made by two officers of the flag-ship *Wabash*, Captain (afterwards Admiral) C. Raymond P. Rogers, and Lieutenant Stephen P. Luce, now a rear-admiral retired.

Early next morning the armed vessels formed in line of battle ; but the heavy *Wabash* got aground on Fishing-ship shoal, and it became necessary to postpone the attack until the following day. That night every preparation was made by the troops for the action which seemed near at hand. Wills were drawn, letters of affection were written, and every man laid down to rest uncertain whether it might not be for the last time. The *Ocean Express*, carrying most of the heavy ordnance and the ordnance stores of the army, was still at sea, and our steamer, the *Baltic*, having on board the regiment second in line to land, had been dispatched in search of her, and in no hopeful spirit, our generals thought, of the difficulties before them,—with an enemy presumably well armed, and prepared at every point to oppose the landing of our troops. Disappointment succeeded apprehension ; for we soon learned that we were to

have no part in the engagement, the navy, as history tells us, reaping all the glory of the conquest of Port Royal.

I need not describe the naval attack of Thursday, November 7, 1861, which put us speedily in possession of the rebel forts of Hilton Head and Bay Point. It is a matter of record, and this paper is intended rather as a description of personal adventure. It was impossible to witness a naval engagement under more favorable circumstances, and, as the only one that I ever saw, it has left an indelible impression upon my memory. The day was clear and beautiful, so that we on board the transports, lying just outside the line of fire, could observe every movement of the battle without risk to ourselves; and we realized the sensations of a Roman populace seated in the galleries of the amphitheatre and watching the contest for life and death of the gladiators below.

We had our little jokes even amidst the alarms of war; and when we saw that the engagement was about to begin, a deputation from the "Society for the Confusion of Useless Knowledge" waited upon the Englishman Edge, and fed his egotism with the report that Captain Dupont has just sent aboard a message saying, that if Mr. Edge was ready he would begin the engagement. The doughty correspondent of the *Standard* hunted up his field-glass, and presented himself on deck as speedily as possible, so that he might not be accused of delaying so important an affair. We had our revenge upon him at that time for his joke about our masked shoals.

When the frowning fronts of the rebel forts appeared, the question arose as to who threw them up. We had with us a young officer of U. S. Ordnance, named Horace Porter, who had during the voyage shown such a remarkable proclivity for throwing up things that his name at once occurred to us all. But we remembered that he was a loyal son of West Point, and would throw up his commission rather than do a disloyal act. Hence, though the circumstantial evidence against him was strong, he was unanimously acquitted.

We were lunching on the *Baltic* during the closing hours of the naval engagement, and as I had hurried on deck in advance of

the others, it was my fortune to be the first one on board the *Baltic* to discover that the national ensign had taken the place of the rebel flag upon Hilton Head, and that the purpose of our attack had been accomplished. I hastened to convey to General H. G. Wright this glorious news, which he received with some incredulity, and, as I thought, with a sigh of regret that his troops were to have no part in that day's great work. Soon the message came from the flag-ship that General Wright was expected to land at once with his brigade. The disembarkation began without delay, and we were still uncertain whether there might not be work before us in dislodging an enemy supposed to be in force upon the island of Hilton Head, beyond the reach of "Massa Linkum's" gunboats. But we found our enemy had had enough of shot and shell for one day, and had stood not upon the order of his going, but had gone "to onc't."

That night, after I had landed with others in the surf, wading ashore in the shallow water from the boat that carried us to the land, I ran up against a correspondent of the *New York Evening Express*, whom I was destined to subsequently know well as General Adam Badeau, of the staff of General Grant. Later on I also encountered for the first time Doctor J. J. Craven, a surgeon of volunteers, whose narrative of his experiences with the chief of the Confederacy, as a prisoner at Fort Monroe, has made his name a familiar one. In one of the forts I came upon the dead body of Doctor Buist, formerly an assistant surgeon in U. S. Army, who was killed in one of the galleries of the fort by a shell, and buried by the falling of a parapet.

It would occupy too much of your time to enter into details which are full of interest in the retrospect. The gunboat *Bienville* was detailed to carry the news of our victory North, and I was invited by Captain Steedman to accompany him. From Hampton Roads I proceeded to Washington, where I was greeted with enthusiasm as an eye-witness of the victory which had thrilled the whole country with excitement.

Standing in the lobby of Willard's Hotel, one evening, tell-

ing my story to a group of listeners, I was accosted by a little man who introduced himself as Senator Simmons, of Rhode Island. Much to my astonishment, I was invited by the Senator to go with him, the next morning, and tell my story to President Lincoln. When we appeared at the White House, with a little company of the Senator's friends, we were introduced immediately to the presence of the Chief Magistrate, and I found myself the centre of attentions, very pleasing to a young man's vanity. As I discovered later on, Senator Simmons's motive in taking me to the White House was to furnish the President with the testimony of an eye-witness to the fact that there were cotton-fields white with the harvest within the lines of our army, which had effected a lodgment among the sea-islands on the South Carolina shore. Simmons was a Rhode Island manufacturer, as well as a Rhode Island Senator. The fact that he was subsequently disciplined by the Senate for speculating upon his official influence, showed that his chief purpose was to secure a permit from Mr. Lincoln to gather cotton, for which his soul longed. I did not understand it at the time, but I recall now the shrewdness with which the astute Lincoln divined his purpose, and succeeded in so turning the conversation that the Senator had no opportunity, during our interview, to prefer the request which he intended to make. Every time he led up to the subject of cotton, Mr. Lincoln would start off with a story and thus divert the conversation into another channel. The President told us his own experience of an attempt to grow cotton in Illinois, where he found the climate too cold for it; he read to us from a copy of the comic weekly of that date, *Vanity Fair*, a story of an interview with a drunken South Carolinian whose Dutch courage enabled him to remain in Beaufort whence all but he had fled. In these and in other ways he amused an hour which the anxious Senator had proposed to employ more profitably, to himself, at least.

The fleet, under the orders of Flag-Officer Dupont, at Port Royal was the largest ever commanded by an officer of our navy, up to that time, and the results accomplished with it



were important. Yet the battle of Port Royal will not rank among great naval engagements. It was a fine exhibition of seamanship and naval tactics; but the resistance encountered was too insignificant to seriously test the metal of our fleet. The forts were open works, manned by a few hundred raw militia, who soon grew weary of seeing their guns dismounted and their gunners killed by shot from the fleet, planted with admirable precision precisely where they were intended to go. They discovered that they had enough of it, and the alacrity with which they departed was a pleasant sight—at least from the ships. Apparently the Confederate officers recalled the story of the militia captain who when the time came to retreat, started first because he was a little lame.

Vessels could not well have been better handled than were those of Dupont. Their constant motion distracted the fire of the Confederate gunners, and their own broadsides were delivered rapidly, with the precision of target practice.

It is interesting to note that the order of battle followed by the Japanese at Yalu, the only naval engagement thus far fought under modern conditions, was the same as Dupont's. The Japanese fleet, like our fleet at Port Royal, sailed in an ellipse, but while Dupont delivered his fire at a distance varying from 600 to 800 feet, the Japanese opened fire at a range of 5300 metres, or over three miles, and at close quarters even the range was nearly two thirds of a mile. As the principal Japanese squadron circled around the doomed Chinese, in the heat of the fight, the range varied from nearly two miles to two thirds of a mile.

The casualties of Dupont's fleet were 25 in all, 8 being killed; A single shell from the *Chen Yuen*, fired at a range of 1700 metres, or over a mile, killed, according to McGiffen, 49 Japanese and wounded over 50. Both engagements lasted about the same length of time, five hours, and the number of vessels in the Japanese fleet was the same as Dupont had in line, 13. Dupont's flag-ship, the *Wabash*, was struck 34 times, and without serious damage. One Chinese vessel, the *Chen Yuen*, was struck 220 times, and another vessel, the *Ting Yuen*,



159 times.\* A single 4.7 inch projectile from a Japanese vessel, fired at a range of 300 metres, or nearly two miles, pierced the conning-tower of a Chinese ship and shattered its inmates "into a shapeless mass." The heaviest gun in our fleet was XI inch muzzle loader, but its destructive effects were out of all proportion less than those of the 12.6 inch breech-loading rifles of the foreign vessels. The average tonnage of the Japanese and Chinese vessels was nearly three times that of Dupont's nondescript fleet of screw and paddle-wheel steamers and sailing sloops-of-war, but the yankee sailors escaped the misery of being shut up in fire rooms at a temperature of 200 degrees, and they were not subjected to the infernal din occasioned by the rattling of steel projectiles against impenetrable armor. Modern ways of fighting may be more effective but they are less comfortable.

This comparison between the old and the new might be carried much further, to show the new conditions under which our sailors must accept the guage of battle. Whatever these conditions may be we may be sure that they will prove equal to them.

" ' But what came of it at last,'  
Quoth little Peterkin,  
' Why that I cannot tell,' said he,  
' But 't was a famous victory.' "

It is time alone, in this instance, that forbids the detail of the results of our victory at Port Royal. Its immediate effect was to stimulate patriotic hopes, and to encourage new efforts on behalf of the Union. I shall never forget the scene witnessed in Hampton Roads on that beautiful Sabbath morning when the *Bienville* arrived with tidings of our victory, and the cannon roared their welcome, as the sailors manned the yards of the beautiful *Minnesota*, and awakened the echoes of the Virginia shore with their shouts of greeting.

\* Commander McGiffen, of the Chinese Navy, who listened to this paper corrected it by saying that the *Chin Yuen* was struck four hundred times. The authority for that statement that the hits were 220 is an article in the *North American Review* by Hon. H. A. Herbert, Secretary U. S. Navy.

W. C. C.

I have been shown a slab of stone on which were still clearly visible the impressions made by the rain drops falling upon a sandy shore millions of years ago, when the ichthyosaurus swam the sea and the mastodon roamed the land. In the fervid heat of Earth's convulsions these passing impressions have been made as enduring as the everlasting rock itself.

Thus it is with the impressions received when our still plastic souls were subjected to the white heat of a fervid patriotism. All else may pass away like a dream in the night, but these impressions will remain with us so long as the soul itself shall endure. It is the common inheritance of such impression, ennobling, elevating, as well as enduring, that unites the members of this Order in a fellowship that not even death itself can destroy.

## THE BATTLE OF CORINTH.

A Paper Read by General D. S. STANLEY, U. S. A., December 4, 1895.

THE surrender of Fort Donelson, on the 16th February, 1862, was a great joy to the loyal people of these then disunited States, and a deadly shock to the people who had disunited them.

Kentucky, with its blooded horses, its big mules, its jeans, and its old whiskey, was in the hands of the "Black Republicans." Nashville, the prospective grand capital of the great Southern Confederacy, was occupied by "Lincoln's hirelings," and Tennessee, which, like unto ancient Gaul, was divided into three parts, had hopelessly gone into the hands of the "mudsills." East Tennessee spurned secession, and the control of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers turned slave-holding, aristocratic, and thoroughly rebel Middle and West Tennessee, with their slaves, rich plantations, their wealth of grain and cotton, their cities, and their railroads, to the use of the loyal Union armies. I remember talking to a very enthusiastic and clever Confederate at the time of the surrender of Donelson. He said: "Oh, this only gives up Middle Tennessee, and no army will dare invade it as long as we hold East and West Tennessee." But the early fall of Island No. 10, put West Tennessee between two fires, and, as time proved, it was lost to the Confederacy forever. The fall of Forts Donelson and Henry opened the problem of where to strike next and strike at a vital point.

Two great railroad centres presented tempting prizes. These were Corinth, Miss., and Chattanooga, Tenn. These two small and unimportant towns became then places of vital

importance in the future history of the United States—Corinth, a city of the plains; Chattanooga, a natural fortress of the mountains; both only worth notice since great railroads crossed within their narrow limits. Had the Union armies been strong enough it would have spared us two years of war to have occupied at the same time both Corinth and Chattanooga. But this could not be, and Corinth was selected as the objective of the next attack upon the Confederacy, and as promptly accepted by Albert Sydney Johnston as the place to try his first and last battle, offensive and defensive.

The battle of Shiloh, on the 6th of April, was one of the bloodiest battles of history, and far-reaching in its results. There was not much in it to illustrate the science of war, but it was a trial of manhood on an immense field, and never afterwards was heard from Southern lips that trite saying, "One Southerner can lick five Yankees."

The battle of Shiloh, 27 miles from Corinth, was the exciting event that immediately called out the energies of the Union and Confederate armies. To hold Pittsburg Landing and to advance on Corinth was the design of the Union general; to hold Corinth for the time was the object of the Confederate. The commanders of the opposing forces were both graduates of West Point. General Halleck, formerly of the Engineers, long a civilian, rich, fond of ease, who could not ride a horse faster than a walk, commanded the Union Army: Beauregard, late a captain in the Engineer Corps of the army, commanded the defence of Corinth. He was a man full of wonderful theories of strategy, and fond of writing them on paper. He had a poor stomach, and always carried with him a Jersey cow, and almost lived on milk; consequently, when Beauregard could not have his cow, and a railroad car to carry her with him, strategy had to be delegated to another, and, fortunately, often failed. The advance of General Halleck's army on Corinth will be a curiosity of history for all time to come. Some mathematical pessimist—I knew the man, a staff officer—computed the time of Pope's advance. Pope commanded the left wing of this immense army of 100,000 men, and the progress from

Pittsburg Landing to Corinth, up to the day we entered the place, was at the rate of one furlong and three rods a day. Several small battles—"affairs" they may be called—were fought during this advance, the most notable at Farmington, by Pope's left wing of the army. The grand turning movement of Beauregard's force was repulsed and failed, and two days afterwards we found that the rebel army of nearly 100,000 men had retreated safely, but not noiselessly. They had folded their tents and stolen away. I say not noiselessly, for I was close to their intrenched line the night they left, and, such noise of whistling engines, such beating of big drums, and flight of rockets, and even cheers of seeming thousands, never before or since disturbed a night as did this grand charivari of the night of 29th of May, 1862, at Corinth. From General Pope down to the drummer-boy, we were all awake that night, listening and interpreting this hubbub. One sentiment prevailed, viz.: Beauregard is reinforcing his right, and will attack us in the morning. As we were the extreme left of our army, and the fellows to be attacked, we were, of course, interested. At daybreak our pickets went forward and found—nothing. The rockets, the drums, all were for effect; the whistles of the engines were reality—they meant the conveying away the last of Beauregard's 100,000 men. Two great armies had confronted each other for six weeks, had parted, and no harm was done.

Without waiting for the next move of the rebels, General Halleck at once set about occupying Chattanooga, and General Buell marched for that important place. Memphis fell with the evacuation of Corinth, and General Sherman occupied that city coincident with Buell's starting for Chattanooga.

Bragg left Opelika with 40,000 of the best trained of Beauregard's army, for the same place. Bragg had 700 miles to march, over poor country roads. Buell had a shorter march, and a railroad to assist him, yet Bragg's army was there first, and from thence invaded Kentucky. The great army which at immense expense had been collected under General Halleck, rapidly dispersed. General Pope was called to Washington, and we whom he commanded regretted his departure sincerely.



His command—two divisions—fell to Rosecrans, and was called a corps, but without a number. General Halleck remained at Corinth until the middle of July, when he too was ordered to Washington.

During his stay at Corinth, his engineer officer, General Cullum, erected a line of earthworks, and in many places abatis were constructed around Corinth, so extensive that 200,000 men would have been necessary to man them properly. For the angles and redoubts of this work, artesian wells were sunk, over 300 feet in depth, to provide for contingencies. During June and July, little worth while recording occurred.

Upon the departure of General Halleck, General Grant took command of all the troops in West Tennessee and Mississippi, and fixed his headquarters at Corinth. The largest force in the Department, about 10,000 of all arms, were in camps 5 or 6 miles outside of the village of Corinth; Hamilton's and Stanley's divisions, 5 miles southeast of Corinth, at the Big Springs, very beautiful camping-grounds, with the finest water. Here, although the weather was intensely hot in July and August, we drilled industriously, practised outpost duties, and fitted ourselves, I believe, for future usefulness.

Corinth was, before the war, a village of 1000 inhabitants, only noted, after the war commenced, as the place of crossing of an east and west railroad, connecting Memphis with Charleston, and a north and south railroad, connecting Mobile with Cairo.

The general country about is flat, with poor soil and scarcity of water. The greater part of the country is wooded with oak and pine. It is a meagre cotton country. The village is near the summit of a great divide. The drain of the village is to the Tennessee, 27 miles north; 10 miles to the west, is the Tuscumbia, running northwest to the Hatchie, and thence into the Mississippi, 40 miles above Memphis. Six miles southeast of Corinth, the water flows to the Tombigbee, and thence to the Gulf. The outposts for Corinth were Rienzi, Jacinto, and Iuka, the latter on the Charleston railroad, and 30 miles east of Corinth.

Meantime, our Confederate foes south of us had two commanders, General Sterling Price, commanding the district of the Tennessee, though far from Tennessee, and General Van Dorn, commanding the district of Mississippi; headquarters, Oxford. They were both directly south of our lines, and their forces were close together.

Our daily life at Big Springs was first disturbed by the discovery that General Price was moving on Iuka, which, strangely, he did upon false information. Both General Price and General Van Dorn were informed by General Bragg, now well on his way to central Kentucky, that General Rosecrans had left Corinth, and had crossed the Tennessee River, and was marching to join Buell. Bragg asked, and indeed commanded, that General Price follow Rosecrans. General Price accordingly marched to Iuka, intending to cross the Tennessee River at Eastport; but Rosecrans had not gone, and General Grant was at Burnsville, 8 miles from Iuka, the night of September 18th, with 8000 men commanded by General Ord. Rosecrans had been ordered to march his two divisions (Hamilton's and Stanley's) by a circuitous route by Jacinto, and make a combined attack with Ord's force upon Price's army. Rosecrans reached the vicinity of Iuka, after a 25-mile march, at 4 P.M. the 17th, and immediately engaged the enemy. The combat was fierce, with the advantage in favor of the Union troops at dark. Grant's force, 6 miles distant, never heard the sound of cannon and remained idle. Very early in the night Price's force fled by the Fulton road. The failure of communication between Grant's and Rosecrans's forces was very unfortunate, but only to be expected where the wings of an army operate on widely-separated lines in a forest country, and the intervening 6 miles of big timber accounts for General Grant's not hearing Rosecrans's cannon. Price's expedition was, however, thwarted and broken up.

Our Union hopes were disappointed, and a quarrel arose between Generals Grant and Rosecrans that had far-reaching, and, I think, very sad results. This occurred in the middle of September. Price retreated to Tupelo. General Grant re-

turned to Jackson, Tennessee, where he had fixed his headquarters, and Rosecrans retained his camps about Corinth.

Several weeks before the movement on Iuka, Captain Frederick E. Prime, a very talented engineer officer on General Rosecrans's staff, suggested that the immense lines of defence constructed under General Cullum's direction, were too extensive to be of any use for defence by a small army, and prepared to construct a system of redoubts, to protect the railroad depot of Corinth. Accordingly, five redoubts were constructed, practically covering the approaches to Corinth from all directions. These redoubts had 4 guns each, 24-pounders, old style, or Parrotts of 20-pound calibre. The soldiers of the 1st U. S. Infantry were drilled to work these guns.

Immediately upon Price's return to Tupelo, he joined his force to all of Van Dorn's, making an army of 25,000 efficient, and on the 1st of October, was at Ripley, 30 miles southwest of Corinth, moving north. At this date General Grant, at Jackson, and Rosecrans, at Corinth, knew that Van Dorn was coming to attack somewhere. He marched directly north, as if intending to attack Bolivar, now occupied by General Ord with 4000 men.

The great wooded valley of the Hatchie River, with its deep, sluggish stream, completely screened his movements from observation from Corinth. Having marched as far north as Pocahontas, he suddenly turned to the southeast, soon repaired the broken bridges over the Hatchie River, and at ten o'clock, October 3d, his troops were in line of battle three miles north of Corinth, between Grant's and Rosecrans's forces, and he immediately attacked the Union force, composed of Davies's and McKean's divisions, which were posted at the old line of works, only to compel the enemy to develop his entire force.

Rosecrans's force to defend Corinth was four small divisions of two brigades each, commanded by Brigadier-Generals Hamilton, Stanley, McKean, and Davies. In addition to their infantry force, there were eight batteries and 1000 cavalry. Without reference to tables, Rosecrans's force may be fairly stated at 14,000 men. Van Dorn says his own force was 22,000.

Three of the divisions of Rosecrans's army, viz., McKean's, Davies's, and Hamilton's, were deployed upon this outer line, intended only for development. Davies's division and two regiments on the right of McKean soon became engaged. General McArthur commanded this force, and, as he called for reinforcements and they were sent him, the affair intended as the action of a grand guard turned into a battle, and engaged the greater part of Price's corps and Lovell's division of the Confederates. It required from ten o'clock until sundown to push McArthur back, which finally did occur, and not in the best order, as McArthur was sorely pressed. A very gallant and promising brigadier-general—Hackelman—was killed on the Union side, and General Oglesby was badly wounded. A brigade of Stanley's division (Mower's) was called for at nearly sundown, and assisted in covering McArthur's retreat, in which Colonel Thrush, 47th Illinois, was killed. At least ten regiments had been engaged, and many officers and men had been killed and wounded. The day was very hot, and drinking-water very scarce. Yet, if our lines were hard, our enemies' were by no means easy. They marched ten miles in the morning, fought all day, and had only the water they carried in their canteens.

Just at dusk the enemy showed force right up the Memphis road, and the 24-pounders let fly shell at the mark. A rebel told me a day afterward that old Sterling Price was there, and a shell just missed his head. The exciting day was over, and by nine o'clock our line was formed for the next day's battle. The entire action had taken place in the northwest angle formed by the two railroad tracks. Our line this night connected three redoubts, none more than half a mile from the centre of the little town.

There were no earthworks or intrenchments; Hamilton on the right, then Davies, next Stanley, McKean on the left. At midnight all slept. At four o'clock in the morning all suddenly awoke. An enterprising rebel artillery captain had quietly brought his 4-gun battery close to our picket line, only 400 yards from our main line, and suddenly fired a volley over



our heads and into the town. The battery continued to fire until one of the 24-pounders in battery Robinette was trained on it, when they limbered up and hurried away; but not until the pickets of the Ohio brigade made a rush upon the battery and captured one of their guns. To this day it is a puzzle what that foolish captain of artillery expected to do by crawling his battery in the dark near to our picket line, and then firing shells into a town at random.

After this rude reveille, we anxiously awaited daylight. It came, and not the crack of a gun disturbed us. We had our coffee. Eight o'clock came and the ominous stillness was yet unbroken. When the redoubts were built the timber in front was cut down, slashed to the extent of 400 yards in front. Beyond this all was timber, so dense as to cover all movements of the troops. At nine o'clock General Rosecrans came to me and ordered a reconnoissance to my front. I immediately sent Colonel Joseph Mower, commanding the 2d Brigade of my division, with two regiments to feel the enemy. These two regiments moved to the front, Major McDowell, 39th, Ohio, commanding the skirmishers. In less than half a mile he was stopped by a heavy line of infantry.

In the fight which ensued Colonel Mower was badly wounded. His horse was shot, and the Colonel was captured. I may add that, after the defeat of the Confederates, at three o'clock, P.M., the Colonel walked into our lines, having been abandoned by the enemy.

At about eleven o'clock the storm broke. Four brigades, formed with regimental fronts, burst out of the woods directly north of the railroad station, and rushed at the town. They fairly covered the front of Davies's division, which stood solid for a time, but as the charging column came close, gave way and dissolved into groups.

I stood on the small hill to the right of the Battery Robinette, and for once in my life I saw a grand and powerful assault. The brigades were in columns of regiments, and coming from cover into a cleared field their formation was splendid. Their



officers rode well to the front, their flags waved gayly and full of defiant confidence. After they had fully emerged upon the cleared ground, I could see every man in the huge column as they broke forth in their high-keyed rebel yell.

The rebels fairly poured into the little town ; they occupied the depot and helped themselves to commissaries ; they took possession of General Rosecrans's headquarters, but did not stop to read his orders. Rosecrans himself and his staff were riding furiously amongst the runaways of Davies's division, trying to rally them. Rosecrans was very mad, and addressed very severe language to the demoralized soldiers, for which he afterward made some amends.

The panic was accounted for from the fact that these regiments had lost heavily in the battle of the 3d. They were weary and dispirited, and the full view of this big column coming with yells straight at them was too much for them. Already they had lost many of their comrades, and had been fought up to that point where men are easily whipped. They fought on many fields afterwards as bravely as any troops could do. But the great assaulting column had made a mistake. They had driven Davies's division and rushed into the interval. Hamilton's division, on their left, and Stanley's, on their right, were intact, and immediately attacked the big column on both flanks with infantry and artillery. For a time the Confederates stood their ground, but Sullivan's brigade pressing close to their left, and the Fifth Minnesota closing on their right, and pouring in volleys, the column vanished, leaving the ground covered with their slain. Scarcely had the big column broken up when another column from Price's corps emerged from the shelter of the woods and came straight toward the centre of my division. The key of the position was Battery Robinette, so called for Lieutenant Robinette, 1st U. S. Infantry, whose company manned it.

The Ohio brigade, composed of the 27th, 39th, 43d and 63d regiments, commanded by Colonel J. W. Fuller, 27th Ohio, occupied the right and left of the battery. This was called at the time, the Ohio brigade. It was my first brigade command. I

had drilled them, and the relations of commander and commanded were certainly those of mutual confidence. The 2d brigade was commanded by Joseph Mower, 11 Missouri, who was wounded and captured early in the forenoon.

As the charging column emerged from the woods the big guns in the redoubt opened on them, as well as the three field batteries now attached to the division; but the column came on, the fallen timber in front of the division, instead of helping the defence, added to the advantages of the assailants, as their skirmishers, by the hundreds, tumbled behind the shelter of the trees, and fired point-blank into our lines. Soon their advance came right up to our front, and their men and ours were exchanging shots at thirty paces apart. The commander of the leading brigade, Colonel Rogers, 2d Texas, rode right up to the muzzle of one of the 24-pounders, and he and his horse fell together. He was a brother-in-law of Sam Houston. He was a gallant man, but not a Union man, as was his great kinsman.

At this period the fight was close and doubtful, and was eventually ended by the 27th Ohio and 11th Missouri springing up and charging the rebel line with the bayonet. Early in the fight my adjutant-general, Captain W. O. Coleman, was mortally wounded. I was dismounted, and I ran into the line of my hard-pressed regiments. These were the 43d and 63d Ohio. The fire on them was very deadly. Colonel J. L. Smith was mortally wounded early in the assault. His adjutant, Heyl, was killed.

Colonel Smith was a model soldier and engineer officer, of rare talents, the son of a brave captain killed in the Mexican War. He had taken this 43d Ohio regiment, and had made it a well disciplined and drilled regiment. He had been under fire before, but only a few days previous to this battle said to me: "I want to go into one fight where there is a storm of bullets, just to see how I can behave." Alas, his wish was gratified, but it was his last storm of bullets.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wager Swayne, lately Commander of the Loyal Legion of New York Commandery, succeeded

Colonel Smith, and very gallantly directed the regiment during the remainder of the fight.

The condition of things in the meantime was very precarious. As the charging column reached the muzzle of the guns, Captain George A. Williams, 1st Infantry, in command of the battery and regiment, seeing his cannon were no longer useful, directed his men to take their rifles. Graybacks came through the embrasures, and some, running around, came in through the gorge of the battery; but it is doubtful if any Confederate who entered the battery ever left it. My anxiety to keep our men up to the scratch led me to run into the line of the 63d Ohio, which held the right of the Ohio brigade. The fire of the Confederate force was particularly fatal to this regiment. Of fifteen officers present when the action commenced, nine were prostrated, killed, or wounded, when the fight ended. Colonel J. W. Sprague, who lately was a prosperous citizen of Tacoma, Washington, and his adjutant, Otis W. Pollock, were unscathed, and did gallant duty in holding the survivors up to their work. Fifty-three per cent. of the 63d Ohio were down, killed or wounded, but the rest stayed and returned the assailants' fire, and conquered.

In European warfare, it is calculated that when one third of a military organization are struck the fight is gone out of the rest, and I think this is generally true; but here we have a new Ohio regiment, a little over a year in service, with officers taken from the busy circles of civil life, which bravely stood up and returned the hostile fire until only three line officers were on their feet, and the regiment did not run; but as soon as the fire ceased re-formed, and were ready for a renewal of the fight.

A part of the 63d Ohio had been recruited near my old home in Wayne County, and, passing amongst the men stretched on the ground just after the fight ceased, a young lieutenant named McFadden, who had received his promotion only a few days before, called to me, and said: "General, come here; I want to say good-bye. I am mortally wounded." He spoke so naturally I could not believe it, and tried to en-

courage him ; but he died in half an hour. He was born within two miles of my home.

The charge of the 27th Ohio and the 11th Missouri, which was directed by Colonel John W. Fuller, commanding the first brigade, really ended the battle of Corinth. The Confederates withdrew into the woods they had advanced from. We re-adjusted our lines, and expected a renewal of the battle. General Rosecrans felt sure that, beaten upon this front, the enemy was moving to the left, to renew the assault from the east. Van Dorn, on the other hand, says : "Rosecrans had received large reinforcements from Jacinto and Rienzi, and therefore I ordered immediate retreat." Thus both commanders were mistaken, and the rebel army left, unmolested, upon the roads they had advanced upon. The next morning a considerable force had crossed Davies's bridge, over the Hatchie River near Pocahontas, where they were badly defeated by General Ord, who crossed his force and attacked them on the east bank of the Hatchie. Had Rosecrans been up, which he might have been, this should have proved utter ruin to Van Dorn's army. Ord's force was stopped, and the Confederates passed up the Hatchie six miles, constructed a bridge upon the dam of Crump's Mill, and continued their retreat to Ripley.

General Grant, Rosecrans's superior, severely censured him at the time for not following Van Dorn's retreat on the 4th, and for his tardiness on the 5th.

There may be some justice in this, but it is easy to criticise after the fact. The test is, put yourself in his place. Rosecrans's troops had marched for two and three days, had fought two days, had scarcely a supply of even drinking-water, the heat was excessive, and the men were worn out. They had narrowly escaped a most terrible defeat, and no one was anxious to crowd their late antagonists.

The battle of Corinth was not a great battle as compared to those of first magnitude in the war, and yet it was bloody enough ; on our side 315 killed, 1812 wounded, 232 missing. Rosecrans reported 1423 Confederates buried and 3000 prison-

ers, mostly wounded men. We now know that it was most disastrous to the Confederacy.

General Sherman, in his *Memoirs*, says: "It was indeed a decisive blow to the Confederate cause in our quarter. From the timid defensive we were enabled at once to assume the bold offensive."

The Confederacy never recovered from it.

They were brave men,—the Confederates who assailed Corinth; they were just as gallant men who defeated them.



## A FEW YARNS OF THE EARLY 'SIXTIES.

A Paper Read by Admiral O. F. STANTON, U. S. Navy, February 5, 1896.

ON the 21st of December, 1860, the Pacific mail steamer *North Star* sailed from New York with more than eleven hundred passengers on board. About 210 of these were navy officers, seamen, and marines, on their way to Panama, to join the United States ship *St. Mary's*. There were also several army officers, with their families, who had taken passage to join their regiments in California. Some of these officers soon afterwards returned to the Southwestern States through Mexico and Texas, and became prominent in the Confederate Army.

On the morning of the day we sailed from New York the news of the secession of the State of South Carolina from the Union was received. The comments on this by the officers of both branches of the service were tinged with sadness. The friendship between the officers, whether from the North or the South, had been much like that of brothers; but now all felt that a change was coming. The prevailing impression seemed to be that more of the States would secede, and, under the doctrine of States'-rights, each would provide for its own government.

However, no arguments as to the merits of the case were held. We were all still under the flag of our country, and on the high seas.

The first night after leaving port some of the sailors became involved in a fight on the forward deck, and in quelling the disturbance the right arm of the executive officer was broken. A little later the same evening, a son of Colonel Albert Sydney

Johnston missed his footing by a sudden roll of the steamer, fell down the companion-way, was badly bruised, and broke his nose. These two accidents made enough work for the army, navy, and ship's surgeons for one evening. While the surgeons were employed in the necessary operations, the boy sat on his father's knee and hardly winced. This pleased the father, but the only remark he made was that "the boy shows good grit." General Johnston was killed at the battle of Shiloh, while in command of the Confederate forces.

On our arrival at Panama we found the *St. Mary's* at anchor in the bay. We relieved the old officers and men, and they went to New York by the same steamer on her return trip. After a few weeks of drills and sail practice we sailed for San Francisco, arriving there about the time of the receipt of the news of the firing on Fort Sumter. These tidings were at first received by the people almost in silence and wonder, for there were many citizens who favored the Southern cause, but few apparently seemed to gather the full import of the event. This state of things only lasted about a day, when the great numbers of American flags of all sizes displayed by the people on their houses, places of business, and on the streets showed what stand the new State had taken. The sharp division into two parties greatly relieved the army and navy officers, who had then only to decide whether they were for or against the Union.

The *St. Mary's* went to the navy yard at Mare Island for some needed repairs, and then sailed for a station off Cape St. Lucas, Lower California, where we remained on the track of the mail steamers, all the time being spent under sail.

This was done to guard the mails and passengers, it having been reported that privateers were fitting out for their capture. After three months of this work, and without having anchored since leaving San Francisco Bay, we returned to that place. At this time the Pacific railroad was not completed—the space intervening between the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads being traversed by the celebrated Pony Express.

The officers of the ship, except the captain and executive

officer, were detached and ordered to New York, their places being supplied by officers of the Volunteer service. When we arrived East we found the navy largely increased in number by the vessels newly built, or chartered, and we were all soon employed in the blockading squadrons or the flotillas on the James and Potomac rivers.

Several of the first style of the "double-enders," so-called, had been completed and were in commission.

These vessels were fitted with rudders in both bow and stern, so they might be ready for river service, and could run up or down without being obliged to turn around. Of some of them it was said, they were built to go both ways, and could not go either; this, however, was not altogether true. They carried heavy batteries, and were quite efficient in rivers or smooth water, but were very uncomfortable, and some of them almost unmanageable in a gale of wind. One of them, the *Tioga*, sailed from Boston under the command of Lieutenant-Commanding George W. Rogers, with a new crew, and one week afterwards was engaged near Windmill Point on the James River, with a part of the Confederate artillery known as Stewart's battery. The crew all worked their guns as calmly and quietly as if it were something they had been used to daily.

The Captain was on the hurricane-deck directing the movements of the ship, and when the shot began to come pretty thick, he said to me: "You had better go down out of this, you may get hurt." I asked him, "How about yourself?" His reply was: "If I get hit you may come here and take my place." The Captain did not get hurt that day, but was killed subsequently off Charleston by a shot from Fort Sumter.

A few days later the *Tioga* was one afternoon employed as escort for the army balloon, when one of the dispatch boats came with orders to go up the river to Harrison's Landing. On nearing that place it was seen that all the gunboats had gone three or four miles up the river to the next bend, where a number of Confederate vessels had come down that day. As night was coming on, we all anchored there.

During the evening the enemy began firing with artillery from three or four positions on the south side, opposite Harrison's Landing, and kept up a lively fire on the Union camp, for about half an hour. The gunboats were too far up the river to reply, and expecting an attack at the same time from the vessels above, remained in their positions. It so happened, however, that one, the *Conemaugh*, had come up the river after nightfall, and had anchored in a position from whence she got in some effective work. The next day General McClellan desiring to occupy the points from which the firing had occurred, sent some cavalry across to reconnoitre and ascertain whether a large creek there was fordable.

Two boats were sent from the *Tioga* to sound for the same purpose. I went in the launch with its crew and part of the marines, and Acting-Master Charles O'Neil was in charge of the first cutter, with its crew and the remainder of the marines. We found the creek to be about two miles long and quite deep. Reaching its head the roll of a drum and the sound of voices were heard. Knowing our cavalry did not carry drums, it was evident we were quite near the outposts of the Confederates, and in such narrow waters, surrounded by thick woods, had gotten ourselves into rather close quarters; so we started down the creek as quietly as we could pull, and fully on the alert for an attack from any point. At a sharp bend near the mouth of the creek, the officer in the cutter suddenly gave the order, "Oars!" and called out, "There are soldiers with arms on that point." Sure enough, there they were, and quite near. As they stood in the bushes on the edge of the water, their uniforms could not be distinguished. At this moment the coxswain of the launch, an excitable Spaniard but a good seaman, levelled his carbine and exclaimed: "I'll kill one any way!" He was pushed down in the boat while I hailed, asking who they were. The answer came back clear and distinct, "Friends." Of course they could see the flags flying in our boats. Still having some doubts, I called out, "What regiment do you belong to?" The answer was, "The 16th Pennsylvania reserves."

This was so particular and descriptive that I could not but accept it as satisfactory, and it relieved a strain on the nervous system of all in the boats.

It turned out that the cavalry had returned to the north side of the river before we had left the ship, owing to a delay in the delivery of General McClellan's note to Captain Rogers, and this force of infantry had just come over and established a picket station near the mouth of the creek.

A few days before this we had been at anchor near Point Powhattan, and another vessel, the *Port Royal*, was at anchor below the point about the same distance away.

The plan was to keep two vessels in that vicinity to prevent the enemy from firing from their rifle-pits on the mail steamers and transports, as they passed up and down the river. Every morning, when the mail came down, and afternoons, as they went up, from Fort Monroe, or when a tow of transports passed, we would commence shelling the rifle-pits and a large wood-pile on the bank above. The convoy for the mail-boats also used to put in some target practice in the same way, so we had exercise enough of this kind every day. The wood-pile thus gradually accumulated a quantity of shell that had not exploded.

One afternoon, a number of vessels passing by were fired on by the Confederate sharpshooters concealed in the rifle-pits and behind the wood-pile. One of the vessels broke adrift from the tow just abreast the old fort on the point. We went to her rescue and so got too close for the efficient use of our big guns, but carried on a rapid fire with our 24-pounder howitzers on the hurricane-deck. One of the shot struck a loaded shell in the wood-pile, making a bonfire which lasted all night, enlivened with occasional pyrotechnic displays in the shape of exploding shell.

These howitzers were, for their time, very useful guns for river work, where the banks were not too high. Of course they were smooth-bore and muzzle-loading, but the ammunition was fixed, and they may be said to have represented the secondary battery, which plays so important a part in vessels of the pres-



ent day. We never got caught close under a high bank but once, and then our opponents were in the opposite plight, for they could not depress their guns enough to fire down on us ; and while they amused themselves at firing at some transports a little farther off, we got into good range for our 10-inch shell gun and that finished the contention for that day.

One Sunday while we were there, two or three negro boys came off in an old flat-boat from the eastern side of the river. The captain asked them where they came from and where they lived. They pointed to a house and said they belonged to Missis Mary Wilther Dowlis. They were then asked where the gentleman of the plantation was. "Gone to Richmond to fight the Yankees," said one.

"Where are the negro men?" asked the captain.

"Dase gone to 'Old Pint' to be contrabands."

"Well," said the captain, "what does Mrs. Dowlis say about these gunboats being here?"

"She say she like to get under dey bottom and blow 'em up."

Then the captain asked them if their mistress needed anything. They thought awhile, and looked at each other ; finally, one said he had heard her say she wished she had some salt. Of this we had plenty and were throwing it overboard, every day, from the beef and pork barrels ; so we sent some ashore and I guess it was welcome, even if it did come from the detestable Yankee gunboat.

No one was allowed to land, but one evening, when at anchor, not far from this place, I obtained permission to take two boat crews and some marines to go ashore, abreast the ship, where there appeared to be a sandy beach, to get some sand for scrubbing decks. We pulled in very carefully and posted the marines a short distance away from the edge of the river, and had four men in each boat, with oars in their hands, ready to shove off at a moment's notice, while the others rapidly filled the tarpaulins with sand. The work was nearly done when one of the marines came running in and told us, in a loud whisper, the cavalry were coming. A snorting of horses

was plainly heard and everybody scrambled into the boats lively enough. We pushed off quickly, but did not get so far away, as we turned towards the ship, to prevent us from learning they were only some loose animals that had been left out to graze in the fields. They evidently wanted to find out what we were doing with the "sacred soil of Virginia."

While a portion of the army was encamped on the south side of the river, from whence the firing on the camp at Harrison's Landing had taken place, General Butterfield, who was in command of this force, invited the captain and myself to ride out along the picket line. It so happened that the horse furnished me had been captured from the Confederate cavalry, rider and all, a day or two before. He was a fine animal, and went along very quietly with the party of some seven or eight riders. After a while we rode into the grounds of a plantation, and on the lawn, fronting the mansion, were a number of slips of paper.

Having some curiosity to find out what they were, I drew my sword and tried to pick one up. As I did this the horse started off on a run and darted out of the gate. Instead of turning to the left, where our pickets were, he turned to the right towards the Confederate picket line. Here was a state of things, and the horse had the best of it for a while; but coming to a small, rough bridge he slowed down, and one of the aides, who had come in pursuit, caught him by the bridle and helped turn him back. I have always thought that horse knew the way to make prisoners for either side. He certainly came near getting one that day.

Not long after this the army left Harrison's Landing and went to the vicinity of Aquia Creek and Alexandria.

We remained there two or three days after the ninety thousand men composing the Army of the Potomac had departed. The contrast with the bustle and hum that had been going on there for six or seven weeks made the place seem very lonely, and suggested the appearance of the plains of ancient Troy.

The ship then went around to the Potomac, was present at the evacuation of Aquia Creek, and later sailed with the

newly-organized flying squadron, under Admiral Wilkes, for Bermuda and the West Indies.

We have lately read a good deal about the fitting out of another flying squadron on the other side of the Atlantic. We do not know yet whether it, too, will sail for "Bermuda and the West Indies"; but history sometimes repeats itself.

On our arrival at Bermuda we found several blockade runners from Charleston in the harbor, so the admiral left one ship—the *Sonoma*—outside, to chase if they should leave, while his ship—the *Wachusett*—and the *Tioga* went into the harbor to coal.

The Governor promptly called our attention to Her Majesty's proclamation of neutrality, but it did not forbid our taking coal aboard once, and we availed ourselves of that chance. The night we were inside, two blockade runners left the harbor, but being discovered by the *Sonoma* they did not venture outside of the marine league and soon returned to port. The next day we went outside and took the place of the *Sonoma*, which then went in for coal.

By this time the wrath of the officials had waxed warm, and an English man-of-war was sent out—apparently to keep us company.

We paid no attention to her, and both remained under way near each other two days. Then the *Sonoma* came out, and we went around to the western entrance to the harbor to prevent the escape of the blockade runners through that channel. The Admiral came out in a day or two and ordered us to remain off the island until our coal supply should be diminished to sufficient to take us to Havana.

During this time we boarded and examined the papers of steamers leaving or entering the port—but always outside the marine league,—and two or three times with the aforesaid man-of-war close to, with her crew at their guns. Of course we were likewise ready for action. The people on shore on one of these occasions became much excited, the stores were closed, business suspended, and the hills covered with the inhabitants of the island, in anticipation of witnessing a sea fight.

Our neutral, however, apparently remembered that we were only applying a doctrine of belligerent rights that they had, as a nation, insisted upon through a long series of maritime wars, and only made a show of force, while we made the examination of their vessels in spite of their guns and the bluster and indignation of the captains and passengers. They afterwards adopted the same tactics while we were in the vicinity of Nassau, but never but once came quite so close to us with their men-of-war. When we fell in with any of them that resembled the *Alabama* or *Florida* (for some of them did very much, and they knew it), they were prompt to assure us they were truly, bluely Britons, and not Confederate cruisers under English colors.

While cruising off the island of Abaco, in company with the *Octorara* and *Santiago de Cuba*, on watch for the Confederate cruisers *Alabama* and *Florida*, which had been reported as being in that vicinity, the lookout at our mast-head reported black smoke to the northward. We made signal to the others and all of us started in chase.

The vessel making the black smoke soon saw what was coming and steamed rapidly off to the northeastward.

We gradually gained on her and soon we began to pass bales of cotton that her crew had thrown overboard. Each bale was then worth about four hundred dollars. We stopped, lowered boats, and commenced picking up the cotton. The *Octorara* followed our motions, but the *Santiago* continued in pursuit. After a while it was found the boats could not tow the bales alongside the ships fast enough, so each boat's crew would lash two or three bales together and leave a man on one of them to hold the claim against the other ship, while the boats towed all they could manage to their respective vessels.

The ocean soon presented the scene of sailors floating on cotton bales, and it was amusing until darkness came on; then the matter changed for there was a brisk trade-wind blowing. I am sure the officers of both ships felt relieved when the men had all been collected, with their cotton bales, late that night. As a matter of fact we would have fared better in prize-money

if we had kept on and been present when the *Santiago* captured the vessel, for she turned out one of the best prizes during the war, and we could have been within signal distance when she was brought to. The type of ships to which I have alluded has gone from the service, but old ocean rolls on as ever—no change there. Storms still rage and its waves break with the same force as of old. The same care and alertness must be exercised to guard against its dangers. Well and truthfully are these facts expressed in the words of the old ballad.

“ Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean, roll !  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain.  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow ;  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.”



## IN MEMORY OF MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN GIBBON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

A Paper Read by Major C. A. WOODRUFF, U. S. A., May 6, 1896.

COMMANDER AND COMPANIONS: I appreciate the honor of appearing before this Commandery, to present my tribute of love and devotion to the memory of our late commander-in-chief, Major-General John Gibbon.

For twenty-four years, in garrison, camp, and field, it was my proud privilege to call him my *friend*. On duty, the strict but just commander; at home, the genial host; around the camp-fire, the entertaining comrade and wise counsellor,—all these, and more, I found him, and your invitation to speak was a call to duty; to respond, a labor of love.

I shall not eulogize a creature of the fancy,—a little more than human, a little less than divine,—but simply tell the story of a pleasant companion, a brave patriot, a stout soldier, a true friend, an earnest opponent, an honest man,—as ready to rebuke the powerful as to defend the weak; one whose strong but kindly heart beat warmly with those human sympathies and passions that ever animate a vigorous physical, mental, and moral manhood.

Could his spirit whisper to the speakers to-night 't would simply say, "Tell the truth"; and his heroic character will not suffer if we only "hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature."

General Gibbon came of English Quaker and Scotch Presbyterian stock, and it was manifested alike by his gentleness towards the weak, his toleration of the honest opinions of others, and his stern, unyielding devotion to duty and principle, regardless of the world's opinion. He was not one of

those time-servers who "shut their doors against a setting sun," and turn a smiling face upon the rising; but all through his long career was pre-eminently one who never permitted selfish policy to hold the helm of duty, nor trim the sails of action to catch the shifting breezes of popularity, but he manfully steered for the right, as God gave him light to see the right.

He always tried to be just, but in private life could n't help being a *partisan*, even as all pugnacious, positive, honest, warm-hearted men are partisans; prompt to redress another's wrongs, his own he did not leave to Time, Truth, and Penitence, but fearlessly battled for them; yet, clothed with official responsibility, was always the just judge and truthful witness for friend or foe.

In all his acts and thoughts he was candor itself, and positively abhorred deceit; the wiles of the intriguer and schemer were absolutely unknown to him. He was no believer in, nor promulgator of, rigid personal liberty laws; yet there was an honest manhood about him that created an atmosphere inimical to dishonor or demoralization, and no man could serve under him without being the better soldier for such service. While a strict disciplinarian, he was no martinet; did n't care for the "fuss and feathers" of his profession, and in the administration of affairs exhibited that greatest of military virtues, sound common-sense; was kind to, and considerate of, the rights of his juniors, and while tenacious of his own rights, thoroughly loyal to his seniors when he considered them within the law.

His dictum, "The law is supreme," was a protest against what he considered its violation by those in authority when they considered it inconvenient or objectionable, and was characteristic of the man; for with him law and duty were supreme, and a tortuous construction he could not or would not comprehend.

Gibbon was a *natural* man, never posed for effect; easy to approach, and while he never clothed himself with chilling dignity, had no trouble in avoiding undue familiarity. As the old

soldier said to the recruit: "Yes; you can go right up to the General same as you would to me, and you 'll get your rights and he 'll speak gentle-like; but you 'll just feel that you had n't better call him Johnnie."

He loved nature, was fond of books, yet devoted to rod and gun, and encouraged every manly sport.

Children always looked upon him as their personal friend, and for woman he had a respectful admiration, and was her earnest champion. A better husband and father I never knew. He was a model of faithful devotion, tender, thoughtful, and most considerate.

Was of a very social disposition, loved to be in the midst of friends, old or young, and while he could keep up his end of the conversation with anecdote, reminiscence, or argument, was also a good listener.

In all our intercourse I never knew him to manifest a disposition to be alone but once, and that was when he stood on San Juan Island where his class-mate, Captain George E. Pickett, formed his company and faced the British admiral's fleet. He walked thoughtfully over the ground, his hands clasped behind him. What tender memories of the days of Auld Lang Syne must have been awakened, what heroic memories of that grand struggle at the stone wall on Cemetery Ridge! When he joined me, all he said was: "George had just such a slope to advance over when he struck my division."

General Gibbon was born at Holmesburg, Pa. (now a part of Philadelphia), April 20, 1827; his parents moved to North Carolina when he was a child and he was appointed to West Point from that State, in 1842, and graduated just in time to reap the traditions but not the honors of Scott's glorious campaign in Mexico.

He said his most valuable experience was gained one night at a card table soon after he reported. He had joined with a few dollars, a horse, equipments, and pistols, and was urged to take a hand, "just to make up a game." The next morning, going on detached service, he was compelled to borrow a horse, saddle, bridle, spurs, pistols, and money for his expenses, but never again played cards for a stake.

His next service was in Florida against the Seminole Indians, and assisted in removing them west of the Mississippi ; was instructor of artillery at West Point, where he prepared the *Artillerist's Manual*, for many years a standard work ; commanded his battery in Utah, and, on his return march across the plains, met the news of our defeat at Bull Run ; hastening east, was assigned to duty as chief of artillery for McDowell's division.

In May, 1862, he was appointed brigadier-general,—his opportunity had come and he was prepared for it,—and from this time on—

“ Till we called  
Both field and city ours, he never stood  
To ease his breast with panting.”

He was given four regiments, composed of the very best of raw material, and tempering discipline with kindness and justice, he forged that thunderbolt of war known as the “ Iron Brigade,” and at Groveton hurled it and two other regiments against five choice brigades of Jackson's army ; to be exact, twenty-six regiments and two battalions, including the “ Stonewall ” brigade.

Thirty-four per centum went down before the leaden storm, but they who stood, with valor held their ground.

In the words of General Bragg : “ General Gibbon stood up with his command, face to face, against the flower of Jackson's corps—and strong and chivalrous was the foe ! Hand-to-hand, almost, was the battle of that night. And then and there it was that Jackson's stubborn fighters learned that iron was as enduring and immovable as stone.”

At the second Bull Run this brigade presented the same dauntless front and retired with honor as the rear-guard from that unfortunate field.

Again he hurled it over the crest of South Mountain ; and at Antietam, that bloodiest day of all the war, the “ Iron Brigade,” with Gibbon's old battery, opened fight on the extreme right of the army and, attacked in flank and front, furnished their full share of the sacrifice. Only three brigades in the entire army

lost as heavily in that campaign, and they constituted what was afterwards known as "Gibbon's division."

A distinguished officer of volunteers said :

"When our brigade first met him he was a brown-headed captain of artillery. He came to our northwestern regiments for his soldiery to fill his depleted battery, and he found what he wanted. A little later he appeared with a star upon his shoulder, and our militia, for they were militia, but with hearts of oak and nerves of steel, thought he was putting on airs. They labored under the impression that he imagined himself to be a wonderful fellow, while they were of the opinion that he was not nearly so great a man as he conceived himself to be. But when he left them they called him 'Lion Heart' and thought he was a bigger man than he ever had the conceit to fancy himself to be. Then officers and rank and file swore by him as they swear by him now."

On that ill-fated December day, at Fredericksburg (which might well have been prevented had his suggestions of November 30th been adopted), he commanded a division of the First Corps and was severely wounded.

The next spring he was back and placed in command of the Second Division, Second Corps, and was with Sedgwick at the capture of Marye's Heights, against which Hancock, French, Humphreys, Howard, and Sturgis hurled themselves so gallantly, but in vain, the winter before.

He brought the Second Corps to the field of Gettysburg, and commanded it part of the time during that battle. Of this great contest, the only battle for freedom on freedom's soil, suffice it to say that when the third day's bloody conflict ended, the Union Army was victorious; the enemy's last charging column a forlorn hope, fourteen thousand strong, led by the very flower of Virginia's sons, was killed, captured, or dispersed, while forty-three per cent. of Gibbon's division, who bore the brunt of this desperate hand-to-hand struggle, lay dead or wounded around their sorely smitten chief.

After a partial recovery from his wounds, he joined his division in time to start on the Wilderness campaign, where he commanded the extreme left around the Brock Road.



Here occurred one of those unfortunate incidents of battle : Hancock says he sent repeated orders to Gibbon ; Gibbon says he never received one of them : those acquainted with both men know that the orders *were sent* and that they *were not* received.

Then followed Spottsylvania, North Anna, Totopotomy, and Cold Harbor, thirty days of continuous fighting, in all of which he and his division bore an important and heroic part, and contributed their share to that bloody thoroughfare from the Rapidan to the James.

On May 13th, General Grant recommended several officers for promotion, as he said, "for gallant and distinguished services in the last eight days' battles." Second on the list was Brigadier-General Gibbon to be made Major-General, and twenty-five days later this promotion came.

Grant also recommended that Meade be placed in command of the forces in the Shenandoah, Hancock in command of the Army of the Potomac, and Gibbon in command of the Second Corps.

Next followed the siege of Petersburg and the fighting on the Weldon Road.

At Ream's Station he tasted the bitterness of defeat ; for the first time in its history the Second Division failed to respond to the call of duty.

Let us for a moment consider the cause ; it will revive heroic memories of the war and add to the glory of Gibbon and the "White Trefoil." This division lost 991 killed and wounded on the Peninsula ; 1966 at Antietam ; 822 at Fredericksburg ; 1530 at Gettysburg ; and in sixteen weeks after crossing the Rapidan, 4207 ; a grand total (not including the tens, the twenties, and the hundreds who fell at Bristoe Station and a score of other minor but glorious combats) of 9516 killed and wounded, a greater number than ever stood in its ranks on any field. Gibbon said : "They were all fought out."

The terrible flail of battle had threshed the rich sheaves of patriotism and the ripe grain was garnered to fatten historic fields or fill the Nation's hospitals.

On November 25th, Major-General Humphreys was assigned to the "temporary" command of the Second Corps and Gibbon promptly protested and asked to be relieved; in forwarding his protest, General Meade said: "It is understood that General Gibbon would have made no objection to serving under General Humphreys as the *permanent* commander of the corps, but thinks that pending such permanent assignment the command of the corps should have been devolved on him."

General Grant said:

"In the assignment of Major-General A. A. Humphreys to the command of the Second Corps, no reflection upon or disrespect to Major-General Gibbon was intended. General Humphreys has long desired the command of troops, and it has been promised him. When General Hancock left, it was understood that he was permanently relieved and separated from the corps, and General Humphreys being the oldest major-general in the Army of the Potomac, was placed in command of it. The wording of the order of assignment might have been made less objectionable; there was, however, no intention of in any way reflecting upon General Gibbon, and it was expected that the temporary assignment would be made permanent by the President. It is hoped that General Gibbon will accept this explanation as satisfactory. I have full confidence in General Gibbon, as a commander of troops, and believe him entirely capable of commanding a corps. I should not like to spare his services from this army, but if after this explanation he continues dissatisfied, he will on his own application be relieved."

This frank explanation, creditable alike to the heart of the great soldier who sent it and to the honor of the one who received it, was satisfactory; he remained a division commander six weeks longer and was then placed in command of the Twenty-fourth Corps, and, with this corps, broke the lines in the assaults of April 1st and 2d.

On the morning of April 8th Sheridan sends word to Grant: "If Gibbon and the Fifth Corps can get up to-night we will perhaps finish the job in the morning." To Gibbon he wrote: "If you can possibly get your men up to-night we may have handsome results."

Since Gibbon's assault on Fort Gregg, his corps had been racing after the cavalry. On the morning of the 8th they started at six o'clock, and were just going into camp after a long day's march when Sheridan's request was received. But it fell upon ears that were not prone to neglect a comrade's call for help, especially as it was emphasized by the boom of distant guns. So once more these men toil on, and only bivouac at midnight, getting rations from one of the captured trains. At three o'clock in the morning, these walking machines are once more swinging along, and, at daylight, the music of their tramp, tramp, filled Sheridan's heart with joy. Gibbon was "up" and the "job" was *finished*.

The long lines of Gibbon's infantry across the enemy's path, with the cavalry on either flank, show them that the end has come. A flag of truce meets Sheridan, the lines are halted, word is sent to General Grant, *peace reigns, the war is over*, and General Gibbon is selected as the ranking commissioner to arrange the details of the surrender, and he it was who received the actual surrender; and this is how he describes it:

"The remnant of the Army of Northern Virginia was marched up by brigades, stacked their arms and deposited their colors and equipments in front of a division of our troops. Thus the curtain dropped over the tragedy of our great Civil War."

He was brevetted major, lieutenant-colonel, colonel, brigadier-general, and major-general "for gallant and meritorious conduct" at Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Spottsylvania, and Petersburg, respectively.

After the war, as colonel of infantry, to which he was promoted from captain, being one of the first so honored, he commands the Rocky Mountain district and guards the constructing parties of the Union Pacific Railroad. When that was completed he was given command of the district of Montana, which he held for eight years, and by constant watchfulness protected its extended frontier. His fourteen companies had numerous combats with hostile Indians and scouted over and mapped an area greater than the whole of New England.

One incident will illustrate a phase of frontier service but little known, and also how ready the General was to stand by his own orders and uphold his subordinates.

He gave a lieutenant, whose respect for law was not as great as his own, the brief but explicit order "to break up the whiskey trade on the Blackfeet Reservation." Whiskey traders are the curse of every Indian Reservation and are generally an especially lawless class of hard citizens, and these were no exception to the rule.

The order was executed with considerable vigor and the expedition was a decided success, from the lieutenant's standpoint.

Later on complaints were received charging that officer with arson, tyrannical conduct, etc. The papers were referred to him and he returned them stating: "I burned such cabins as contained whiskey, and those only which the occupants had received no authority to build; the contents were destroyed because I had no means of transporting them, as the captured horses were in poor condition, and for the same reason I compelled the owners to walk."

The General sent for him: "Mr. —, I have not called upon you for any statement, just tear off that endorsement and return these papers 'Contents noted.' " This instruction was promptly complied with. The General's endorsement was in effect: "Lieut. — was ordered by me 'to break up the whiskey trade on the Blackfeet Reservation'; he reported that he had done so and these papers confirm his report; that the whiskey traders were also 'broken up' is an incident for which I alone am responsible."

In 1876 he took the field against the Sioux and led the little band of 379 men that, with solid lines, made their way in the face of from 3000 to 7000 hostile warriors up the valley of the Little Big Horn, rescued the survivors of the 7th Cavalry, and buried Custer and his dead.

The next year, with 182 men, after a forced march of 250 miles over the roughest kind of mountain trail, during which he crossed the Rocky Mountains twice, he attacked the Nez

Perces Indians, and fought what General Sheridan characterized as "one of the most desperate engagements on record."

The General had carefully examined several of their camp grounds and knew just what an undertaking he had before him.

As he was making the night march to strike these Indians, a few stars were shining amid the banks of clouds; pointing to one of these, he whispered to his Adjutant: "Old Mars is smiling upon us to-night, that's a favorable omen."

At two o'clock the little band was in position near the unsuspecting hostiles—two hours of weary, chilly waiting; at daylight the advance commenced; in a few moments the command was in the village, and then it was a regular *melée*—cheers, yells, shots, groans, curses; men, white and red, squaws, and larger children, all took a hand.

The Indians left 89 dead on the field. Fourteen bullets found their billets among the 17 officers, 3 of whom were killed and 4, including General Gibbon, severely wounded. The entire command lost 31 killed or mortally wounded, and 38 wounded, a larger per centum of loss than that of the Light Brigade at Balaklava,—but Gibbon had not blundered. It was not magnificent, but it was war.

Of this fight General Terry said:

"It is painful to contemplate the famous 7th Infantry, a regiment whose history is interwoven with that of the country, from the battle of New Orleans to the present hour, so attenuated that, with more than half of its companies present, it could take into action but 182 men. And it is equally painful to behold its Colonel, recently a major-general and a distinguished corps commander, reduced to the necessity of fighting, rifle in hand, as a private soldier, and compelled, by a sense of duty, to lead a mere squad of men as a forlorn hope against a savage enemy, from whom defeat would have been destruction."

For the next seven years he commanded his regiment in Minnesota and Wyoming, was Inspector-General of the Department of Dakota, and for several months commanded that



department and later the Department of the Platte. In '85 he was promoted to Brigadier-General and assigned to the command of the Department of the Columbia, and, for the last year of his active service, of the Department of California also. During this period in his command—with the exception of the anti-Chinese troubles—peace reigned. For his management of affairs during these troubles, he received the thanks of the Governor of Washington Territory and the people of Seattle. In 1891, having reached the statutory age of sixty-four, he was, while in the full possession of mental and physical vigor, retired, and the name of the last commissioned officer of the United States Army in Mexico disappeared from the active list.

He entered the Military Academy a boy of fifteen, and for forty-nine years gallantly upheld the flag of his country, honored her uniform, and furnished an example of devotion to duty that the soldier of to-day can follow with honor to himself. He was fortunate in the fact that his lot was cast in the most inspiring and eventful period of our history, and our country was fortunate in having such a champion at such a time.

Although reared in the South, with which most of his family linked their fortunes, and for which three brothers battled, he was never blinded by the sophistry that State allegiance was above National patriotism.

Like General Lee, he was opposed to slavery. Speaking of the origin of the contest, he said: "The cause of our great civil war was that the whole of the American people had not then learned to recognize the fact that the civilized world had reached the conclusion that human slavery was morally wrong. We all know it *now*." And when the war came he saw his moral and patriotic duties clear and did them well.

After Appomattox, he stopped fighting, and his great commander's magnanimous: "Let us have peace," was echoed in his heart, and thenceforth, until that heart was stilled in death, it never treasured an unkind thought, nor did his tongue utter a harsh or unkind word against those with whom he contended. February 6, 1896, he calmly, peacefully, passed from life to eternity, and the heroic spirit that animated one of the last

surviving stars in that bright constellation of leaders who shaped the destinies of the Army of the Potomac joined our honored dead !

“ He was a friend to truth, of soul sincere,  
In action faithful and in honor clear ;  
He broke no promise, served no private end,  
Devoted to his family, and friend ;  
To duty, true. He leaves this world of strife  
With noble record of an upright life.”

And when history tells of those who were America's brave soldiers, unselfish patriots, pure men, and loyal sons, who always *really* had the courage of their convictions, few names will lead that of *John Gibbon*.

## GENERAL GIBBON IN THE SECOND CORPS.

A Paper Read by General FRANCIS A. WALKER, May 6, 1896.

GENERAL GIBBON came to the Second Corps early in 1863. The wound he had received at Fredericksburg was healed ; but the laurels he had won by his spirited attack in that battle were still green. The division to which he was assigned was the one which had been formed by Charles P. Stone on the Upper Potomac, in the fall of 1861, and which had later been commanded by John Sedgwick, on the Peninsula and at Antietam. It had gone into action at Fredericksburg under Howard ; but that officer had subsequently been assigned to the command of the Eleventh Corps. General Gibbon's characteristics were, from the first, fully manifest. Intelligence is perhaps the single word which best describes him as a commander of troops, whether in the field, on the march, or in battle. There was nothing dull, or heavy, or commonplace about his performance of any duty. He looked fully at every situation ; saw it for himself ; saw it clearly ; studied it in the light of experience and of military knowledge ; and as the result made up his opinion and took his course of action. His powers of perception and his powers of reflection were well balanced ; and both faculties were actively used whenever he had any military duty to perform. He knew just what he was going to do and just why he was going to do it, whereas many of us have known more than one general officer, not at all incapable, who saw just far enough ahead and around to get his brigade or division or corps into action, without any clear conception of what he was really trying to do.

I do not mean by what I have just said that Gibbon was one of those extremely theoretical officers who formed plans of action in which the sole possible success of which could come from the absolute mechanical precision of several successive operations. I remember on several occasions listening with simple astonishment at hearing certain officers, of high position, laying their plans for the day's action, which required that every one of several successive steps should be taken in a certain way, and in a certain time, with the utmost exactness. There was nothing of this in Gibbon. The theoretical and practical were well adjusted in his mind and temper. But, as I said, he never undertook to do anything without knowing just what it was he was trying to do, and without a keen appreciation of the methods and ways by which he was to do it. His mind was always alert, without being uneasy. While he was prompt and thoroughly subordinate in obeying orders and directions, having respect as well to the spirit as to the letter of his orders, he never ceased to exercise his own intelligence; he never threw himself back upon corps headquarters, as if he had no occasion to see and think for himself. An experience of two years and a half as adjutant-general of the corps, I think, justifies me in saying that the fault to which division commanders were most prone was that of discharging themselves of all feeling of responsibility, and of acting in a purely mechanical way upon the orders which came down from corps headquarters, without responsiveness and without suggestiveness. I have seen many a division commander who was brave and efficient in executing precise orders, to whom it never seemed to occur that he was to contribute anything to the intelligence which directed and animated the mighty mass of living valor which made up his army corps. Not so with Gibbon. He was absolutely free from the fault of obtrusiveness; yet his fine military scholarship, his keen perception, his sound judgment, necessarily became a power throughout the larger command of which his own brigade and division formed a part. Division commanders of this type immensely strengthen the hands of their corps commanders,

however capable and however distinguished. Such division commanders in their time were Meade and Reynolds and Humphreys. While absolute and instant obedience should be the rule of every military body, that constitutes no reason for the suppression of intelligence and even of intellectual life, as is so often the case; and that commander is either a born tyrant or an arrant humbug who imagines that he can do all the thinking that is necessary in his command.

As a disciplinarian, General Gibbon was disposed to be rather severe, and in a few instances showed himself too hasty. But the general effect of his conduct of troops in camp and on the march was in the direction of good order, health, and military efficiency. His general purposes of kindness and of justice were so manifest that the troops had for him both respect and regard. He could not be said while in the Second Corps to have filled General Sedgwick's place in the hearts of the division; but he was liked as well as trusted by the officers and men generally.

Chancellorsville was the first action in which the corps was engaged after General Gibbon was assigned to it. Here he was detached with two brigades to support the Sixth Corps in its enterprise against Marye's Heights. Gibbon's command came under fire and lost some men; but the impossibility of getting across the canal which carried water from the river above the town to the mills of Fredericksburg, prevented its being generally engaged. The misadventure was in no sense Gibbon's fault; but was wholly due to the astounding ignorance of the Fredericksburg plain and Marye's Heights which characterized all the operations from the 17th of November, 1862, down to the day of which we now speak. I well remember on the 12th of December, 1862, carrying a message to Burnside from Couch, saying that, so far as the latter could judge from the reports of citizens, contrabands, and deserters, a deep trench or canal ran around the town, between it and the hills, which would prove a serious obstacle to the passage of troops; and I never shall forget how indignantly and even angrily Burnside rejected the suggestion. What came of this ignorance, on the 13th of



December, is a part of the history of the war, and one of the most painful and distressing parts of that history. And here, again, after the occupation of Fredericksburg and the Fredericksburg plain for four or five days in December of 1862, we find the staff of the Army of the Potomac so ignorant of the features of that field as to allow Gibbon to be sent into a position which was an impossible one. Ordered to attack the enemy's extreme left, he simply could not get his troops into action, because of the intervening watercourse.

But, if Gibbon's part in the Fredericksburg-Chancellorsville operations of April to May, 1863, was a subordinate one, he was to have no cause of blame at not being allowed his full share of achievements, and dangers, and sufferings, in the next battle, which was destined to be the greatest of the war. When, on the afternoon of the 1st of July, General Meade sent Hancock forward, with his staff alone, to take command of the field where Reynolds had been killed, and the First and Eleventh Corps had sustained terrific losses, the charge of the Second Corps was turned over to Gibbon, who led it to the vicinity of Gettysburg where Hancock resumed command. On the second of those great days, when Hancock, after the wounding of Sickles, was ordered to take command of the left wing of the army, Gibbon again came into command of the Second Corps; and it was under his personal direction that the fierce action of the late afternoon took place between the left of the Second Corps and the Confederate division of Anderson, which overran our advanced force at the Codori House, momentarily captured one of our batteries, and even reached the main line of the Army of the Potomac, only to be hurled back by Gibbon's resolute defense. On the third and greatest of those memorable days, Hancock was assigned to the command of the left centre, comprising his own troops and those of the First Corps; and Gibbon assumed immediate command of the Second Corps. During the great cannonade directed upon the predestined point of Longstreet's great assault—"the clump of trees,"—the infantry of the Second Corps lay patiently on their faces under the iron hail waiting for the

charge which they knew was sure to come. It is not necessary to tell again, here, the story of the 3d of July. For our present purpose, it is enough to say that, while Longstreet never left the crest on which his troops had been formed for the assault, and while, according to the usual reports, the commander of the leading division, Pickett, never crossed the Emmettsburg road, Hancock, the commander of the left-centre, fell among the regiments of the Vermont brigade which had been thrown out in front of the main line of the Potomac Army; while Gibbon, commanding the corps on which the assault was specially directed, was struck down among the soldiers of the 19th Maine, whom he was at the time encouraging to climb the rail fence and attack Armistead's and Garnett's brigades in flank. With gallantry and self-devotion such as this on the part of officers holding high commands, it is not a matter to be wondered at, that the soldiers in the ranks rushed eagerly forward to wall around the head of the Confederate column, and to bring to defeat the greatest enterprise which the Confederate armies ever undertook.

Gibbon's wound had been a very severe one; and it seemed to me, as I observed him in daily intercourse, that the effects of the injury to his nervous system lasted a great while. Even when his ordinary health was fully restored, I was disposed to think that he was still suffering, though in a steadily diminishing degree, from the shock of his Gettysburg wound. During a portion of his necessarily long absence from the field, one of the officers of his staff, whose name can never be mentioned without honor, continued on duty, joining the staff of General Warren, then temporarily commanding the corps. This was Lieutenant Frank Haskell, of Wisconsin, who had won distinction in earlier actions; but at Gettysburg placed himself in the front rank of the heroes of the war, being one of the two mounted officers who rode between the hostile lines as they gave and took fire at the stone wall by the clump of trees, on the third day. He was destined to a glorious death at Cold Harbor, where he fell on the 3d of June, 1864, as Colonel of the 36th Wisconsin, leading a brigade with the

lion-like courage and perfect intellectual poise which characterized his whole military service.

During the winter of 1863 to '64, General Gibbon had sufficiently recovered his health and strength to return to the front; but the division of which he took command, though nominally the same, was far from being the body of troops he had previously known. The assignment to the Second Corps under Hancock, of the old divisions of Hooker and Kearny, from the Third Corps, had caused the previously existing three divisions of the Second to be consolidated into two. Gibbon's division, as it entered upon the overland campaign of 1864 was a very large one, comprising an aggregate of 11,367 men. It was a superior body of troops; and, under the leadership of the new lieutenant-general fresh from his victories in the West, the troops looked confidently forward to a decisive campaign. To follow out Gibbon's part in the series of fierce and bloody battles which ensued, would consume too much time and exhaust your patience. On the first day's battle in the Wilderness, Gibbon was placed in command of a giant battery of more than forty guns, supported by Barlow's division of infantry, to protect the flank of the Army of the Potomac against Longstreet coming up from Gordonsville, and attempting to pass, as was anticipated, into our left rear. In this position, he remained the rest of that day, and during the fierce fighting on the morning of the 6th of May. It was here that he became subject to one of the most painful imputations of his whole career. In his official report, General Hancock stated that, on the morning of May 6th, he directed Gibbon to move Barlow's division forward across the Brock Road, till it should come up on the left of the corps then heavily engaged with the enemy. This statement Hancock supported by the testimony of at least two members of his staff. On the other hand, Gibbon solemnly declared that he at no time received any definitive order to that effect, though the contingency of advancing Barlow's division had been spoken of between Hancock and himself. The question is a difficult one, a delicate one, and a painful one. The history of the war abounds

in such instances of misunderstandings between officers of the highest intelligence and of devoted loyalty. Certainly, no man could ever believe that General Gibbon conscientiously failed or delayed to attempt to execute any order given him.

While, as Hancock's adjutant-general, I have always felt bound to explicitly set forth his views and those of the Second Corps staff, I have never yet been satisfied in my own mind, and I frankly said as much in my *Life of General Hancock*. What I believe, without any positive evidence, to have taken place is somewhat as follows: Hancock proposed that, in due time Barlow's division, which, as I have said, was under Gibbon's command, supporting the great battery on the left, should be advanced across the Brock Road into the tangled woods, and pushed forward until it came up on the left of Mott, thus continuing our line in that direction, from which, as things turned out, and even as had been anticipated, it was exposed to its greatest danger. Of this intention General Gibbon was fully advised; and it is most probable, considering all the evidence, that at some moment an order to that effect was given. Then, probably, it was that new intelligence as to movements of the Confederates on the Catharpin Road, and from the direction of Todd's Tavern, reached headquarters, and caused a general understanding that the advance of Barlow's division should be suspended pending developments. The origin of the news brought in from the left, that the Confederates—supposed to be Longstreet's corps coming up from Gordonsville—had appeared in that direction, was a very curious one, and illustrates how small events may affect the fate of great operations. It seems that a body of convalescents—stated at about 1700 or 1800—intending to join the troops at the front had been misdirected, and sent off towards Todd's Tavern. Why the Confederates did not gobble them up, it is difficult to understand; but probably just because of the audacity of their action, they were, in fact, not molested. Having wandered far enough on the left of the army, the officer in charge of the column made up his mind that he had better get back under cover, and at the time in question was making his way toward our left rear.



This mass of dusty, travel-worn convalescents had been observed by our outposts, and was reported as a Confederate column. Just here, I think, we have the explanation of the misunderstanding between Hancock and Gibbon. The alarm caused by the appearance of this accidental body of men on our left, from which direction, be it remembered, Hancock had even the day before been advised that he must look for Longstreet, caused a suspension of whatever orders may have been given for the advance of Barlow's brigades. When, after some delay, the appearance of this erratic column was accounted for, Hancock would seem to have assumed that Gibbon would send, or had sent, the troops forward without further orders. Gibbon, on the other hand, would appear to have awaited Hancock's pleasure in the matter. It is to be said that Hancock himself always treated the case purely as one of misunderstanding, never alleging any indisposition on Gibbon's part, or making any more of the matter than to explain, in his official report, why it was that Longstreet's flanking movement at about eleven o'clock in the morning found his left so unprepared.

No charges of misconduct were ever preferred, and no allegation of lack of loyalty or energy made. With the warmest affection and admiration for General Hancock, I feel free to say that my mind has always inclined towards Gibbon's view of the occurrence. I remember well how thoroughly we were aroused by the reported appearance of Confederate infantry on our left, and how much our minds were occupied by apprehensions of a serious movement into our rear. Beyond this I can only say that, after the scare was over, I did not suppose that Barlow had gone forward. This is merely negative evidence; but, so far as it goes, it tells on Gibbon's side. When the grand crash came, and Longstreet's flanking column drove us back to the breastworks along the Brock Road, Barlow's fresh brigades furnished, for a little while, the mainstay of our somewhat disorganized, though not defeated, corps.

Leaving this painful episode, regarding which nothing more seems likely to be said, since every actor in it is dead and has spoken his last word, let me go forward in a rapid survey of



Gibbon's work in later battles of the campaign. On the 10th of May he made an unsuccessful attack, in co-operation with Warren's troops, upon the enemy's works at Spottsylvania. In the great battle of the salient, on the 12th of May, Gibbon's division was formed in support ; but during the wild excitement of that tremendous charge, two of his brigades, Carroll's and Owen's, were carried away by the enthusiasm of the occasion as by a cyclone, and, dashing to the front, struggled even past some of the leading troops, and entered the works of the left almost at the same moment with the brigades of Brooke and Miles, from Barlow's division. During the terrific action of twenty hours which followed, while the contestants at times grappled each other across the breastworks, and great standing trees were cut off and brought down by the fire of musketry alone, Gibbon's division shared to the full in the honor and the danger and the loss. Every brigade was tried to its utmost ; every regiment squeezed dry ; the cartridge-boxes filled over and over again ; the trenches more than once cleared of the dead, that the living might find a place to stand. It was an awful and a glorious day. Eighteen cannon and four thousand prisoners, with numerous colors, were the fruits of this great attack. On the next morning, the 13th, Gibbon sent Carroll with two brigades forward, and brought out two more guns, which had been left overnight between the contending lines, making the total number of pieces captured twenty. From the 13th through the 17th of May, the Second Corps was not engaged ; but on the morning of the 18th, Gibbon's division, now reinforced by the Irish Corcoran Legion, of New York, and two or three other regiments, pushed forward from the line captured on the 12th, over ground cumbered with the fast-decaying bodies of those who fell upon the 12th, and sought to carry, with special reliance upon the enthusiasm of the new troops, the line which the enemy had constructed to cut off the salient. The enemy's position was found too strong and too fully occupied to be carried ; and Gibbon was finally ordered to retire to save further loss, Meade and Hancock becoming satisfied that the enterprise was not a practicable one.

During the operations on the North Anna and the Totopotomy, Gibbon's troops were frequently engaged. The difference of opinion which originated in the Wilderness produced absolutely no effect, so far as I was able to judge. Hancock freely sought Gibbon's advice, as that of a thoroughly accomplished soldier. There was, however, little in the last twelve days of May to afford distinction to any body of troops or any commander in the Potomac Army; though there was, on the other hand, nothing at all discreditable in what was done. General headquarters ordered a succession of movements in the dark. The troops coming up into new positions, invariably found themselves anticipated by the enemy's sagacity and activity. After confronting formidable positions, rapidly intrenched and strongly occupied, for a longer or shorter time, and after making more or fewer partial or general assaults, headquarters were satisfied, and the army again moved to the left. The losses of this period were not monstrous; but any loss, however small, must have been altogether out of proportion to any results which could reasonably be expected from these methods. They were purely in the nature of feeling the way for a possible opening.

At last, before the first of June, the commander-in-chief abandoned the direct route; and, letting go his hold on his base of supplies at Acquia Creek, swung strongly and boldly over to the Peninsular route. At Cold Harbor, almost the identical scene of Porter's great fight of June 27, 1862, the leading corps of the Army of the Potomac, the Sixth, was to support Sheridan's cavalry, in an attempt to occupy that position, in advance of the arrival of the Confederates; and it was there to be joined by Smith's Eighteenth Corps, coming up from White House on the Pamunky, which had been McClellan's base of supplies. Two days later, the united Armies of the Potomac and the James delivered an assault upon the formidable works which had been hastily constructed to hold the roads to Richmond, there only six miles away. In that desperate enterprise, Gibbon's division was conspicuous for the gallantry of its officers and men, and for its monstrous losses. Notwithstanding

the fact that so many officers of rank had already fallen in forty days of almost continuous fighting, four full colonels, Peter Porter and James McMahon of New York, Frank Haskell of Wisconsin, and Harry Boyd McKeen of Pennsylvania, were killed in Gibbon's division alone; while 1674 officers and men fell in one awful twenty minutes.

Brilliant and bold as had been the movement by which Grant let go of the direct route from Washington to Richmond and swung over to the line of the Pamunky, the change of base which, with an interval of nine or ten days, followed the terrible defeat at Cold Harbor, by which the Army of the Potomac was transferred from the line of the Pamunky to that of the Appomattox and the James, far exceeded the former both in boldness and in brilliancy. The Second Corps was the first from this army to reach the field of Petersburg on the afternoon of the 15th of June. In the assaults of the 16th and the 18th, which definitely closed the bloody series of attacks upon intrenched positions, which render the whole period from the 10th of May to the last named date almost unique in the history of war, Gibbon's division took part. It was while his troops were preparing for the assault which was to be made exactly at high-noon, that a little incident occurred which may have in it enough of the real flavor of military life to be worth mentioning here. As the corps-mail was brought to me from General Meade's headquarters, I noticed a sealed letter from the Attorney-General's office, addressed to Major-General John Gibbon, U. S. V. Calling an orderly, I at once sent the letter over to General Gibbon who, with his staff, was on a little mound in plain sight and at no great distance from the place where the corps staff were assembled. A little later, my name shouted across the intervening space caused me to turn in that direction, and I saw Gibbon waving something in his hand and heard him shout, "Walker, come over here!" So, as I was not particularly occupied, I got on my horse and trotted over. Gibbon said he had just received—as I well knew—his commission as major-general and he wanted me, as an officer of the adjutant-general's department, to swear him in at once, so

that, if he should be killed in the approaching attack, Mrs. Gibbon would get a major-general's widow's pension. So I put on my most judicial air, administered the oath, which my position as assistant adjutant-general authorized me to do, and made John Gibbon, then and there, a major-general of volunteers.

In the extensive turning movement which took place on the 22d of June, in which the Second Corps, then under the command of Birney, by reason of Hancock's disablement from his old Gettysburg wounds, was to be swung forward further to envelop Petersburg, pivoting its right on the left of the Fifth Corps and advancing its own left as rapidly as the right of the Sixth Corps could be got to move, Barlow's division was on the left of the corps, pivoting on Gibbon. General Meade, having lost patience with the slowness of the movement, necessitated by the extreme length of the line, which embraced three corps, at last ordered Birney to proceed without further regard to the Sixth Corps. Owing to this ill-advised order, the Second Corps was shortly after struck in flank and rolled up in a most humiliating fashion. Barlow's division, the first to encounter the blow, fell back with considerable loss; and Gibbon's division, sharply clipped on end by the active enemy, also had to give ground, with the loss of the four guns of McKnight's battery, which were upon his front. This was the first battery the Second Corps ever lost. Only once before, namely, in the battle of the Po River, on the 10th of May, 1864, had it ever given to the enemy so much as a single gun, disabled, in all its terrific actions. The affair was over in a very few minutes; but the annoyance and irritation it caused were of a lasting character. It was the worst blow which the prestige of the corps had, down to that time, ever sustained. With hardly an opportunity to fire a shot, the corps had lost more prisoners than it lost on the Peninsula; more than it lost at Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville combined. In the mortification caused by this affair, Gibbon shared deeply, and, under the sting of it, reflected very sharply upon one of his brigade commanders, an officer of good repute for soldierly efficiency and promptness.



During the first expedition to Deep Bottom, on the north bank of the James, a movement which involved little severe fighting, though a great deal of hard marching, Gibbon was in command of his division; but at the time of the second expedition, in August, he was absent from the army, by reason of a brief leave of absence accorded him by General Meade. He returned to the front in time to take part in the disastrous action at Ream's Station, on the 25th of August, where the Second Corps, reduced to a shadow of its former self, by the almost incessant marching and fighting of four months, having lost during the campaign, twenty-seven division or brigade commanders killed or wounded, with one hundred and twenty-five commanding officers of regiments, and more than twenty-three thousand officers and men, was attacked, in a thoroughly bad position, by a largely superior force under A. P. Hill, and driven from some part of its breastworks, with the loss of nine guns and nearly two thousand prisoners. The two small infantry divisions at Ream's—Mott's being in the intrenchments at Petersburg—comprised less than seven thousand men at the beginning of the action: yet, even after the terrible disaster which had befallen, through Hill's successful charge, it held a considerable portion of its intrenchments for several hours in the immediate presence of three or four times its numbers of the enemy; and even recovered, through a desperate dash, led by Hancock and Miles in person, three guns of Dauchey's battery. While few of the once famous regiments, which were thus roughly handled at Ream's Station, can be said to have borne themselves with their pristine spirit, it is undoubtedly true, that it was the old division of Sedgwick, or rather what remained of it, which carried itself with the least credit. It is pitiful to think of regiments like the 19th and 20th Massachusetts captured almost without firing a shot. I am sure that Gibbon did all that was in his power to do, on this blackest of all days in the calendar of the Second Corps; but that all was little enough. When a brigade commander like Thomas A. Smyth, of Delaware, the last general officer who fell in the war, was obliged to report that he simply could not bring his troops up against the enemy,



it is hard to see what the bravest and most efficient division commander could have done.

It is with this melancholy farewell that John Gibbon parted from the Second Corps. He was, indeed, still upon the roster of the corps, as the commander of the Second Division, when the expedition to the Boydton plank road took place, toward the end of October, 1864; but he was absent from the command under orders from general headquarters; and his troops, now fully recovered from the disaster of the 25th of August and again in good condition to meet the enemy, were commanded by General Smyth. In February, 1865, Gibbon's high merit, as testified to by all under whom he had served, and all who had served with him, caused his promotion and appointment to be commander of the Twenty-fourth Army Corps. With what distinction he acquitted himself in that command, alike in the victorious assaults of the first and second of April, which crowned the long and painful labors of the much enduring armies of the Union, and in the fearful race and running fight by which Lee, escaping from Petersburg, was successfully cut off from escape southward into the Carolinas, and westward into the mountains, you will hear this evening, told by one far more competent than myself to describe the various rapidly moving incidents of these remarkable events. I have only sought to bring before you General Gibbon's services in the Second Corps. Much of this was of a kind which could not be shown in a brief sketch. Much of the best of it was of a kind which would require an elaborate exposition of the situation and the circumstances in order properly to set it forth.

## THE OLD VERMONT BRIGADE.

A Paper Read by Lieutenant-Colonel ALDACE F. WALKER, U. S. V., October, 7, 1896.

ONE of the greatest embarrassments of the Northern Army throughout the war, was the lack of permanence in its organization.

Immense armies were demanded, and were produced. Their efficient organization clearly required stability. The division should have been the smallest permanent unit, to be solidified and preserved. Upon the usual basis, this would have furnished a body of ten thousand men constantly present for duty—a military unit easily handled in the camp, on the march, or in action, and always ready to fuse and throb with mutual sympathy and self-reliant pride. As the years went on, more was heard of this or that division; the reputation of many of our most successful generals was made while holding such a command. It is difficult to conceive what would have been the result if a given number of divisions had been organized in 1861, and their ranks kept full to the end. But nothing of the kind was attempted.

There were, however, a few brigades in different portions of the army, the integrity of which was to some extent preserved. One of these was the organization known as the "Old Vermont Brigade." The adjective "old" was at first used to distinguish this particular brigade from a second Vermont brigade of nine months' troops, whose only battle was Gettysburg. At the last, the word involved the secondary idea of respect and affection, as when employed by the soldiers in speaking of "Old Grant," "Old Sherman," or "Old Sedgwick."

The first, or, "Old Vermont Brigade," was organized in October, 1861, upon the soil of Virginia, a few miles south from Washington. After nearly four years of constantly active service, it was disbanded in June, 1865, at almost precisely the same spot. Its formation was suggested to General McClellan by Colonel William F. Smith of the 3d Vermont, a distinguished engineer of the regular army, who was its first brigade commander. The command of General Smith soon took on the proportions of a division; he afterwards became commander of an army corps, and was known familiarly as "Baldy Smith."

The original components of the Vermont Brigade were the 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th Vermont infantry regiments; all of which were enlisted in the summer of 1861, for three years' service. These organizations were represented in its ranks to the close of the war, by re-enlistments, though their ranks were not kept full, and at the last their numbers were greatly reduced. The 11th Vermont, after eighteen months' service as heavy artillery in the fortifications on the north of Washington, joined the brigade, May 12, 1864. It had but two regularly assigned brigadier-generals; there were many occasions, of course, when a senior colonel was in command. Its first brigadier was General W. H. F. Brooks, who afterwards successfully commanded the Tenth Army Corps. His rule was firm and efficient, and his regular-army education and experience were of great value. After his promotion, the command presently fell to Colonel Lewis A. Grant, of the 5th Vermont, then the senior officer of the brigade. He was subsequently made a brigadier-general, and led the brigade to the end. General Grant was afterwards Assistant Secretary of War when the Secretary of War was Redfield Proctor, who was at one time major of the same regiment and is now a United States Senator. General Stannard entered the army in the Old Vermont Brigade, and subsequently commanded the Second Vermont Brigade at Gettysburg.

A body of men like this, when subjected to the stringent demands of active campaign service, soon becomes self-reliant

and coherent. The touch of elbow which gives united action is felt throughout the organization. A sense of solidarity is developed, bringing the assurance that the fractions are not merely individual regiments, but are parts of a greater whole; and a continuing consciousness exists, that support and assistance will not be wanting, if required. The Old Vermont Brigade received no factitious support from war correspondents. Metropolitan newspapers seldom found space to advertise its deeds; illustrated weeklies published no alleged pictures of its charges; but in the Army of the Potomac, there was abundant appreciation of its merits. Its chief characteristic was not dash or display, but steadiness. There was no elaboration in its drill. The skirmish-line was its delight. The secret of its acknowledged pre-eminence on the battle-field was its extraordinary tenacity. Although its active service embraced more important engagements than almost any other similar command in the Northern Army, it was seldom, if ever driven from its position by assault. It was famed for a certain quality of steady, quiet, intelligent courage, comparison which was high honor.

At Sheridan's famous battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, 1864, Getty's division, known as the Second Division of the Sixth Army Corps, was the farthest from the point of Early's fierce attack at daybreak. Getty's second brigade was the Old Vermont Brigade, which held the centre of the division through the day. Getty's was the last division to come into the fight. It was moved by the left flank a mile across the field, and fronted to the right, thus forming its line in the face of the entire rebel army, which by that time had passed over the camps of the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps in Early's successful charge. Three of the Vermont regiments were at once ordered out as skirmishers, into the dismal fog which enveloped the entire attacking line, and amid the tumult and dismay which covered the field with disaster. They deployed through a broad cornfield, diverging and gradually taking proper distances, then across a little watercourse, through a pasture, aligning instinctively and almost without a word of command,

forward into the scattering grove, even then occupied by the advance of the enemy, and on to its farthest margin, where the rolling ground sloped away. There, with an open view to the front, five or six hundred skirmishers arranged themselves for battle, prepared to cover for a time the defensive position which Getty with the remainder of the division was endeavoring to find and assume. It is believed to have been the first moment, on that disastrous morning, when the rush of the surprise was confronted by a skirmish-line, well out in front of a line of battle; and by eight A. M. there was no other organization which could be seen or heard holding ground against the enemy.

Although the position was practically chosen by the men themselves, in the centre of confusion and dismay, it was maintained in perfect steadiness, and with an entire understanding of a skirmisher's duty. The grove was held, with some loss, for an hour or more, until artillery was brought up by the enemy, and two lines of rebel infantry were distinctly seen, advancing to drive back the Vermonters' skirmish-line. Then, receiving the order to retire, and assembling as they went, the three regiments took position with the rest of the brigade, in the centre of Getty's division,—the only Union troops then in line of battle, with their front to the foe. A determined stand was here made; a terrible artillery fire was silently submitted to; three successive line-of-battle charges were repulsed; and, after a desperate conflict, the division eventually received and obeyed an order to retire, when two rebel divisions had executed a flank movement around its right. Moving back once more, this time in line of battle and with well-dressed ranks, Getty's division presently faced about again, a mile north of the village of Middletown, and took up a new defensive position, with every regiment in perfect order. A new skirmish-line went to the front, and once more the true battle formation was presented. This was perhaps ten or eleven o'clock A.M. The fog had lifted, and the day was bright. Cavalry formed on either flank. Two or three batteries of artillery rallied in the rear. Then the unexpected happened. General



Sheridan, whose absence was known and deplored, was seen dashing down the pike, in hot eagerness to find the front line of his scattered army. The first infantry troops before which he halted, were those whose movements have been hastily described. "What troops are these?" were his first words; and "The Vermont Brigade" was the first answer, amid cheers and yells that filled the air. Colonel Tracy of the 2d Vermont, then commanding the brigade, rode up to salute, and said: "We're glad to see you, General Sheridan." "Well, by God, I'm glad to get here!" We'll have our camps by night!"

How vividly a scene like that burns itself into one's memory! Words cannot describe it. The artist's brush cannot paint it. But it stands distinct in the chambers of the mind; and, when its vision is awakened, the eyes fill, and the throat swells, and the soul thrills in quick response.

I have no hesitancy in saying that Sheridan's greatest victory was very largely, if not chiefly, due to the cool and dogged steadiness of the Vermont Brigade during the hours before he arrived upon the field. It is generally conceded that Getty's division remained in the fight of that morning at least two hours after every other organization had been successively defeated. When at last it retired, a position was deliberately selected where the fight could be resumed. It thus became the nucleus on which the army formed. The Vermont Brigade was the centre of Getty's division during all that day. The first brigade, on the right of the division, was commanded by one of the Vermont colonels, permanently assigned, General James M. Warner, a member of this Commandery. It was composed of the 62d New York and four Pennsylvania regiments. General Bidwell, of Buffalo, commanding the third brigade, upon the left, was killed about nine A.M., while repulsing one of the rebel charges made upon the semicircular crest which the division occupied; soon after this his men began to waver under the fierce attack, when the appeal was heard, "Don't run till the Vermonters do," and they stood steady to their work. This Brigade embraced the 43d, 49th,

77th and 122d New York, together with the 7th Maine and the 61st Pennsylvania.

Sheridan, in his official report of the battle, makes the situation clear. He says :

“ On arriving at the front, I found Merritt’s and Custer’s divisions of cavalry and General Getty’s division of the Sixth Corps opposing the enemy. I suggested to General Wright that we would fight on Getty’s line, and that the remaining two divisions of the Sixth Corps, which were to the right and rear of Getty, *about two miles*, should be ordered up, and also that the Nineteenth Corps, which was on the right and rear of those divisions, should be hastened up before the enemy attacked Getty.”

And again, in the same report, he says :

“ Getty’s division of the Sixth Corps confronted the enemy from the first attack of the morning until the battle was decided.”

In his Memoirs he writes as follows :

“ Getty’s division, when I found it, was about a mile north of Middletown, posted on the reverse slope of some slightly rising ground, holding a barricade made of fence rails, and skirmishing slightly with the enemy’s pickets. Jumping my horse over the line of rails, I rode to the crest of the elevation, and then, taking off my hat, the men rose up from behind the barricade with cheers of recognition. An officer of the Vermont Brigade, Colonel A. S. Tracy, rode up to the front, and, joining me, informed me that General Lewis A. Grant was in command there, the regular division commander, General Getty, having taken charge of the Sixth Corps, in place of Ricketts, wounded early in the action.”

Sheridan proceeds with the story as follows :

“ I crossed the depression in the rear of Getty’s line, and, dismounting on the opposite crest, established that point as my headquarters. Crook met me at this time, and strongly favored the idea of fighting, but said that most of his troops were gone. General Wright (of the Sixth Corps, who had been in command of the army) came up a little later, when I saw that he was wounded, a ball having grazed the point of his chin so as to draw blood plentifully. Wright

gave me a hurried account of the day's events, and when told that we would fight the enemy upon the line which Getty and the cavalry were holding, and that he must go himself and send all his staff to bring up the troops, he zealously fell in with the scheme ; and it was then that the Nineteenth Corps and two divisions of the Sixth were ordered to the front."

The subsequent advance of the army and the total rout of the enemy as the sun went down, are known to all.

This was by no means the first occasion on which the Vermont Brigade had exhibited the cool and persevering steadiness and composure under extreme difficulties which distinguished it so highly in the Army of the Potomac. Its conduct at Cedar Creek was not accidental, but was habitual. There was never a time after the Peninsular campaign in 1862 when the knowledge that the Vermont Brigade was holding a point of danger did not give confidence to all the army, or when its absence from the fight was not a cause for regret. Its troops were commonly known as "the Vermonters." When brave John Sedgwick, the beloved organizer and commander of the Sixth Army Corps, marched his men thirty-two miles in a day to the sound of the guns at Gettysburg, he issued an order, as reported by his adjutant-general, which has since been often repeated : " Put the Vermonters ahead, and keep the column closed up."

I remember a group of troops from other States, whom I found conversing around a picket-fire in front of Petersburg, while making the grand-rounds as " Officer of the Day," one night in the early spring of 1865. The story was evidently of some desperate occasion, when the danger was extreme ; for the narrator concluded, with the hearty approval of all the group, as I approached : " Then is when we wanted the Vermonters."

In the summer of 1864, Early was knocking at the back-door of Washington, and the Sixth Corps was ordered to move by water from Petersburg to its relief. When the first boat arrived, President Lincoln, silent and careworn, was standing on the wharf. As soon as its landing was made, he inquired

what troops were on board, and was told the name of the general who had occupied the steamer as headquarters during the trip. The anxious President turned away with evident disappointment, saying: "I do not care to see any major-generals; I came here to see the Vermont Brigade." And he was at the landing when the Vermont Brigade arrived.

To give the story of the Old Vermont Brigade in detail would be substantially to write the history of the Army of the Potomac. Its proper presentation would require a volume. Upon an occasion like this, there remains only time to hastily sketch its services, pausing to speak more particularly of two or three matters perhaps not generally known.

The 2d Vermont regiment was in the first battle of Bull Run, and witnessed Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court-House. The first important campaign of the brigade as an organization was with McClellan on the Peninsula. The first assault upon an entrenched line made by the Army of the Potomac was the celebrated charge of a detachment of the Vermont Brigade across the mill-dam and into the enemy's works at Lee's Mill, near Yorktown. The battle of Williamsburg followed, and the army trailed its slow and tortuous way until it finally halted astride the Chickahominy. The battles in which the Vermont Brigade honorably participated in this ineffectual demonstration against Richmond were Golding's Farm, Savage's Station, and White Oak Swamp. At Savage's Station, in particular, the men fought desperately and the loss was enormous. The 5th Vermont regiment had not exceeding four hundred muskets in the battle, and its killed and wounded numbered 206. General D. H. Hill, in his *Century* article describing this action, says that a Vermont regiment made a desperate charge upon the division of McLaws, and was almost annihilated. "Baldy" Smith's division did its part well through the whole campaign of disaster, and was among the last to leave Harrison's Landing when the army was recalled to Washington. It did not arrive at Alexandria in season to participate in the second Bull Run, although it marched out towards the south through Fairfax Court-House.

It was active in the Antietam campaign, taking a brilliant part at the battle of South Mountain, known in its annals as the storming of Cramton's Gap. Its next serious engagement was General Burnside's unfortunate battle at Fredericksburg, where its experiences were painful and its losses large. When General Hooker, shortly after repeated the experiments, in what is known as the Chancellorsville campaign, the duty assigned to the Vermont Brigade, with a few other troops, was the storming of Marye's Heights. The hill was carried by a brilliant and successful charge, and Sedgwick's part of the battle was a complete success. At Gettysburg the Sixth Corps was the last to reach the field, and most of it was held in reserve. The position occupied by the Old Vermont Brigade is marked by the marble statue of a crouching lion, ready for its spring. Speculations have often been made concerning the possible result, in case Pickett's charge on the third day had proved successful; but such conjectures are of little value unless the fact is kept in view that Sedgwick's command was under arms, in readiness at any moment to participate in the battle. In the course of Meade's pursuit of Lee, a so-called skirmish took place at Funkstown, Maryland, in respect to which General Sedgwick's official report says: "The Vermont Brigade were deployed as skirmishers, covering a front of over two miles; and during the afternoon repulsed three successive attacks made in line of battle. The remarkable conduct of the brigade on this occasion deserves high praise." Soon after this, General Sedgwick was asked to detail his "best brigade" for duty at New York City in connection with the draft riots then in progress. He designated the Vermont Brigade, which spent August and September, 1863, in and about this city. Returning to the army, it was received with music and military salutes, and took part in Meade's Mine Run campaign, including a severe engagement at Rappahannock Station.

The next spring the army was reorganized for active service under General Grant, and on May 4th it crossed the Rappahannock. On May 5 and 6, 1864, the battle of the Wilderness was fought. Getty's division was detached from the Sixth Corps,



and sent to occupy and hold the Brock Road, at the crossing of the Orange Plank Road, until the Second Corps, under Hancock, should arrive. It was a desperate duty, and the circumstances were such that the service performed was little known outside the army. The assault, under Lee in person, was sustained for hours by Getty's division without support, and the entire loss of the Second Corps, on May 5th, was not equal to that of the Vermont Brigade alone. On the second day, the Second Corps took the front and delivered a successful advance; but reinforcements of the enemy presently enabled Longstreet to sweep down its flank in apparent victory. "We thought," he afterwards said to Mr. Swinton, "that we had another Bull Run on you." But two brigades from Getty's division were waiting, and the steadiness and nerve of the Vermonters were never more signally displayed. The Brock Road was held, and on the evening of the 7th the Army of the Potomac took up its march to the south. The battle of the Wilderness was an enigma; it has even been doubted whether, in fact, it was a Northern victory. But the troops engaged had no such doubt. It was the last occasion when General Lee made an attack in force upon the Army of the Potomac. The losses on both sides were nearly equal. Getty's Division sustained at this time the heaviest loss experienced during the war by any division in any battle, a total of 2994. The Vermont Brigade suffered one-tenth of the entire loss of Grant's army. It crossed the Rapidan with 2800 men, and its casualties in the Wilderness aggregated 1234, or 44 per cent. Of the officers present for duty, three-fourths were killed and wounded. Twenty-one officers were killed, or died of their wounds.

The army moved on toward Spottsylvania, and the Vermont Brigade, by a forced march, was brought to the right of the Sixth Corps once more. It was directed to take position on the left; and as the brigade, reduced to half its former size, began to move down the line, the men nearest broke into spontaneous hurrahs, and its march was made under a continuous roll of cheers.

The fighting for a time was now almost constant. General Sedgwick was killed, and General Wright succeeded to the command of the corps. General Getty had been severely wounded in the Wilderness, and was in a Northern hospital. Three of the Vermont regiments were engaged in Upton's famous charge, which captured what was known as the "bloody angle." Ordered to withdraw, they refused at first to do so. But the position gained was abandoned, and was the scene of a terrible conflict two days later on. Then the Vermont Brigade for nearly eight hours was engaged in a hand-to-hand fight across the breastworks. A tree was here cut off by bullets, described by the Confederate General, McGowan, as an oak tree, twenty-two inches in diameter, which injured several men of the 7th South Carolina regiment when it fell. Mr. Swinton says: "Of all the struggles of the war, this was, perhaps, the fiercest and most deadly. The musketry fire had the effect to kill a whole forest within its range." In these engagements about Spottsylvania Court-House, the brigade lost nearly four hundred men more; and when it was reinforced, on May 15th, by the 11th Vermont, fresh from the defences of Washington, the new portion of the command outnumbered the old. One hundred and fifty recruits at the same time joined the older regiments, and the men were still stout at heart, feeling that they were moving to the south and had at last left Fredericksburg behind them.

Several other collisions with the enemy occurred, of which time does not permit mention; the region about Spottsylvania Court-House was soon abandoned in a movement by the left flank still southward across the North Anna. Thence a like manœuvre repeated brought the Sixth Corps, on June 1st, in face of a prepared line of earthworks near Cold Harbor.

The brigade participated actively in the desperate but successful attempt to carry the rebel position, fortified the ground gained, and was under fire for twelve days without a moment's cessation. Then, moving by the left flank once more, the army crossed the Chickahominy and the James, and pushed forward to the attack then in progress upon Petersburg. After con-

stant fighting here for twenty days, including a battle on the Weldon Road that cost the brigade a loss of over four hundred and fifty officers and men, and a raid to Ream's Station on the south, the Sixth Corps was suddenly ordered back to Washington, then threatened by Early, who was approaching through Maryland with considerable force. The Vermont Brigade was near the head of the corps as it marched up Seventh Street from the landing and pushed straight out to the presence of the enemy. The entire population of Washington thronged along the line of march. The day before had been one of almost absolute panic. The morning saw the streets filled with old campaigners, whose rapid steps and easy swing told the story of veteran experience. Before sunset there was a "right smart" fight within five miles of the National Capitol, and the next morning Early's army was gone.

Then followed a weary month of marching and counter-marching, by night and by day; across the Potomac, through Leesburg and Snicker's Gap into the Shenandoah Valley; back again to Washington; out once more by way of Frederick to Harper's Ferry; back to Frederick, and on to Harper's Ferry again. The men were weary and worn by continual hurrying to and fro, with no apparent object or result; until one day a new commander was announced, and a new order of things presently began.

General Sheridan's campaign was cautiously conducted until he received authority to "go in." One of its early incidents was a falling back some forty miles from Strasburg to Charleston, at which place an unexpected attack was received by Getty's division, which was covering the movement. This was once more the Vermonters' day upon the skirmish-line; and though no other troops were engaged, and the affair finds no mention in the histories, it was for them as bitter a little fight as could well be imagined. The brigade held its ground all day against several attacks of infantry and a severe artillery fire, without asking for support. Two divisions of the enemy were in its front. General Early, in his *Memoir of the Last Year of the War of Independence*, says of this affair: "I

encountered Sheridan's main force near Cameron's Depot, about three miles from Charleston, in a position which he commenced fortifying at once. Rodes's and Ramseur's divisions were advanced to the front, and very heavy skirmishing ensued and was continued until night ; but I waited for General Anderson to arrive before making a general attack." Although the rest of Sheridan's army was in position some distance in the rear, the only troops engaged on our side upon this occasion were the regiments of the Old Vermont Brigade. A comparison of the accounts given by both the opposing commanders clearly shows that Early was endeavoring to bring on an engagement, and Sheridan was quite willing that he should ; but the unusual tenacity with which the Vermont Brigade held the skirmish-line prevented the battle, though both Generals desired it.

Sheridan's first serious engagement in the valley was the battle of the Opequan, named from the Opequan Creek. This encounter is often spoken of as the battle of Winchester ; but as that city was taken and re-taken some eighty times during the war, its name is useless for any special identification. After the battle of Opequan, however, the rebel army saw it no more. On the morning of September 19, 1864, the army broke camp at 2 A. M., and the Vermont Brigade led the column of infantry, marching straight to the west.

If there were time, it might be interesting to describe this action sufficiently to call attention to a series of accidents which upset General Sheridan's calculations and caused him to wholly change his plan of battle during its progress. In his *Memoirs* he says :

"The battle was not fought out on the plan in accordance with which marching orders were issued to my troops, for I then hoped to take Early in detail, and with Crook's force cut off his retreat. . . . It was during the reorganization of my lines that I changed my plan as to Crook, and moved him from my left to my right. This I did with great reluctance, for I hoped to destroy Early's army entirely if Crook continued on his original line of march towards the valley pike south of Winchester ; and although the ultimate results did in a measure vindicate the change, yet I have always

thought that by adhering to the original plan we might have captured the bulk of Early's army."

In conversation during the later years of his life, General Sheridan expressed himself still more strongly, saying in substance that he had always regretted the change from his original plan, which sacrificed the opportunity for a much more important victory than the one which he in fact obtained.

General Early criticises Sheridan for his failure to take advantage of the opportunity open to "have destroyed my whole force and captured everything I had."

During this engagement, the writer had an excellent opportunity to observe the condition of affairs on the extreme left of our army. The opportunity to envelop the entire rebel force from the south was perfectly apparent, and was freely discussed in the ranks; the appearance of troops in that direction was anxiously expected. They failed to come, and the battle was ended by an attack from the other flank of the army which the whole line took up in turn; but I have never seen the least reason to doubt that if Crook's command, after the reorganization of the line, had pursued the direction originally contemplated, and come in on the south of the rebel army, there would either have been an entire surrender by the enemy, or a quick retreat into the North Mountains.

A brief allusion only can be made to the battle of Fisher's Hill, three days later, in which the enemy was driven from the strongest position in the Shenandoah Valley, by a secret movement executed by Crook, who marched his two small divisions all day through the woods and along the mountain side, and delivered a complete surprise upon the enemy's left flank about 5 P.M. The Sixth Corps, at the same time, charged in front, directly against the works occupied by the rebels at the crowning points of the line of defense on the high hills that here cross the valley. General Early says, that he intended to withdraw that night, but when his left was turned, his men abandoned their position and "my whole force retired in considerable confusion." He omits to notice the fact that their haste was so extreme that eleven hundred men and sixteen



pieces of artillery were left behind. The heavy artillerists in the Vermont Brigade enjoyed the exhilarating sensation of turning the guns of a captured battery upon the retreating foe.

After the pursuit to Staunton, the army returned leisurely and camped on the north side of Cedar Creek. Early presently again occupied Fisher's Hill, from which his movement across Cedar Creek was made against our army in Sheridan's absence, which has already been described, and which ended the war in the Shenandoah Valley.

In December, 1864, the Sixth Corps returned to the Army of the Potomac and was assigned a position at the extreme left of the line on the south-west front of Petersburg. The Vermont Brigade occupied works previously constructed by troops which it had relieved, facing northerly, near the farthest point at that time held by our army in that direction. Picket duty and an occasional skirmish occupied the days and nights until the latter part of March, 1865, when active work was resumed.

At daybreak on April 2d, an event occurred which is well worth a careful description. The battle of Five Forks had just been fought and won. The time had arrived when it was considered necessary to break through the entrenched line of the enemy. General Wright was sure he could do it, and told General Meade that whenever he got the word he would "make the fur fly." The enemy's line was closely studied. General L. A. Grant discovered an opening in the rebel entrenchments, where there was a little ravine which their works did not cross. This was opposite the farthest point to the west then held by our army. He describes what took place as follows :

"Knowing that a vulnerable point of attack was sought for, I called General Getty's attention to this place, and he in turn called the attention of Generals Wright and Meade. All came down, and we went out together to examine it as well as could be done at a distance. It was decided to make this the point of attack, and the Old Vermont Brigade was selected to form the entering wedge.

Orders were given the night previous for my brigade to move out at twelve o'clock, and to take the position that I might select as most favorable for the purpose, and for the other troops to follow."

The plan thus outlined was closely followed. While the troops were being massed for the assault, a general bombardment was in progress all along the line, which continued throughout the night. The Vermont Brigade moved out, under strict orders to hug the ground and observe the utmost silence, and laid down three hundred yards from the enemy's picket line. The other brigades of the division took position on its right. The other divisions of the corps were in echelon on either side of Getty. Each brigade was massed in columns by battalion. Axemen were in front, to cut away the abatis. General Getty's official report says that Grant's Vermont Brigade "was made the directing column." It was ordered that upon the firing of a certain gun from Fort Fisher the whole Sixth Army Corps should rise and charge together, silently and without firing a musket. For three hours after the preparations were complete, the Sixth Corps waited for the signal gun. The night was very dark and cold. The ground was damp, and the men were almost benumbed, as they lay upon it, without fire or light. Cannon shot were frequently exchanged, and the projectiles whizzed over the heads of the troops in both directions. By some unlucky chance, a picket fire was opened, to which the rebels replied sharply, and many casualties occurred in the prostrate ranks of the corps. General L. A. Grant was wounded in the head, and Colonel Tracy again took command of the brigade. Colonel James M. Warner, of the 11th Vermont, had for some months commanded the third Brigade of Getty's division. The cannonading was so heavy that the signal gun, when fired, was not recognized. The order to advance was finally given. The troops rose to their feet, and the massed columns moved out silently into the night. The entire corps took up the movement as directed. The blunders of the Mine were not repeated. Twelve thousand men were formed into a living wedge, to penetrate the

strongest line of works ever constructed in America. Suddenly the enemy's pickets heard the tramp of the approaching army, opened a scattering fire, and fled to the works behind them. Silence was no longer required, and a mighty cheer arose, while the Sixth Corps rapidly pressed forward on its charge. The rebel works were almost instantly manned; the enemy had evidently also been under arms through the night; musketry and artillery swept the field, but the column moved on. There was disorganization and confusion as the lines of abatis were pulled aside, and the men were on their mettle; dashing into the ditch, they climbed the parapet, and poured a resistless torrent, across the enemy's defenses, as the day began to dawn. There is no dispute, that the first man to mount the parapet was Captain C. J. Gould of the 5th Vermont, who was bayoneted in the face and back, as he jumped within the fort. The first mounted officer to cross the works was undoubtedly Colonel Warner of the 11th Vermont, who led the charge of the third Brigade. The scene, as it appeared to a non-combatant, was described by Surgeon S. J. Allen, of the 4th Vermont, medical director of the division, who was standing on the parapet of Ft. Welch, in rear of the attacking column, anxiously peering into the night. He could hear the muffled tramp and rustle of the moving host, but could discern nothing. He saw the flashes of the first volley, heard the answering shout from ten thousand throats, and then he saw, stretching across the front for half a mile, a line of flashing fire, crackling, blazing, and sparkling in the darkness, more vividly lighted up by the heavier flashes of artillery; shells with their fiery trails sped through the gloom in every direction. While he was intently watching that line of deadly fire, suddenly in the middle of it there appeared a tiny black spot, a narrow gap, which spread and widened, moment by moment, to the right and left; and then he knew that the line was pierced, and our men had carried the defences of the enemy.

It is claimed by historians on the other side, that this feat was rendered easy, by reason of the depletion of the troops upon the rebel line. This hardly accords with known facts.

It is certain that the entire line of breastworks against which the charge was directed was fully manned, and that a seemingly solid wall of fire was maintained until the charging party reached the works and broke through; that all the artillery commanding the line of march was in full play, including many enfilading guns; that three thousand prisoners were taken by the Sixth Corps; and that it lost eleven hundred men killed and wounded in the charge. It was no boys' play. If the line of attack had not been well chosen and quickly traversed, the corps could not have succeeded. No mistakes were made by officers, and the spirit of the men was superb.

The results are well known. The Sixth Corps pressed forward without a moment's delay, and, before nightfall, had cleared the entire country between Hatcher's Run and the Appomattox River. General Lee in person attempted to stem the tide, and narrowly escaped capture. The news was telegraphed to Richmond, and Jefferson Davis with his cabinet took a special train for Danville at 2 P.M. In the evening, Petersburg and Richmond were evacuated, and the end of the war was near.

A few days later, I heard General Meade say that the gallant and successful charge of the Sixth Corps on the morning of the 2d of April was in his opinion "the decisive movement of the campaign." Candor compels me to add that he called it "decisive," but the peculiarity of pronunciation did not weaken the value of the praise. It was undoubtedly the decisive movement of the final campaign of the war, which soon resulted in the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia. The importance of the part taken by the Vermont Brigade on this occasion may safely rest upon the facts which I have stated.

The next day the whole of Grant's command started for the west with a new objective,—Lee's flying army. Sheridan and his cavalry pressed the pursuit with such vigor that three days found them in advance of Lee's left wing. He planted General Crook and General Merritt, with their cavalry, directly across the road which the rebels were taking, and then hur-

ried round to their rear, where he met the Sixth Corps, which he had been trying for several days to get under his orders. When the men found that Sheridan was putting them into the fight, their enthusiasm was indescribable. They charged across Sailor's Creek, attacked the enemy furiously, and forced the surrender of General Ewell and eight thousand men, caught between the cavalry and infantry lines.

A few days later, almost identical tactics were repeated at Appomattox Court-House, the remainder of Lee's army surrendered, and the war was over.

No doubt many remember an article by Colonel Fox in the *Century Magazine* of May, 1888, entitled "The Chances of Being Hit in Battle"; an article which, while purely statistical in form, was intensely interesting, and was subsequently expanded into a volume. One of the tables given was a list of infantry regiments whose loss during the war in killed was two hundred or more, embracing every regiment in the Northern army in which two hundred or over were killed in action or died of wounds received in action. This list contains only forty-five regiments; it includes the 2d, 3d, 5th, and 6th Vermont. His roster of "three hundred fighting regiments" of course embraces the entire brigade—2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 11th Vermont. A list of one hundred and three regiments losing sixty-three men or over, killed or mortally wounded in a single battle, includes five regiments of the Old Vermont Brigade at the battle of the Wilderness, and another at Savage's Station. The total number of deaths in the brigade during the war, including killed in action, deaths from wounds, from diseases, and in rebel prisons, was 2417, being about 25 % of the total membership of the brigade, original enlistments and recruits. Its losses in killed and mortally wounded in action are 1172, a greater number than any other brigade in the army.

The brigade was engaged in thirty different battles, the names of which are embroidered on the colors of its regiments. It was fortunate in its officers. No unnecessary sacrifice of life is chargeable to reckless handling. Its casualties were evenly distributed; their severity was simply owing to the remarkable



personal character of the rank and file. They were called on for the hardest work; they never knew when they were whipped; they stood together like men, and they fought every battle to the end; not one of their colors was ever in a rebel hand; their appearance was quiet, and their speech was often homely; but their hearts were stout and their aim steady. They were never surprised or stampeded; no panic ever reached them; their service was intelligent, faithful, and honest; they had the full confidence of their commanders; and their countrymen will forever honor their memory. In the words of General Martin T. McMahon, the well known Adjutant-General of the Sixth Army Corps: "No body of troops in or out of the Sixth Corps had a better record. No body of troops in or out of the Army of the Potomac made their record more gallantly, sustained it more heroically, or wore their honors more modestly" than the Old Vermont Brigade.



## INDEX.

- Alabama, The steamer, 221, 288  
*Albatross*, U. S. Gunboat, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124  
*Albemarle*, Steamer, 193  
 Allen, Surg. S. J., 332  
 Ames, Gen. Adelbert, 193  
 Anderson, General Robert, 39, 40  
 Anderson, General, 328  
 Anderson, Major, 213  
 Anderson's, division, 305  
 Armistead's brigade, 306  
 Armstrong, Com'dr James, 214, 217, 218, 220, 221, 222  
 Atlanta, Snake Creek Gap and, 7-29  
 Atlanta, The battle of, 240-254
- Badeau, Gen. Adam, 262  
*Baltic*, The Steamer, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262  
 Bangs, Francis P., 257  
 Banks, Gen. Nathaniel P., 65, 66, 120, 147, 156  
 Barlow's division, 307, 308, 309, 310, 313  
 Bate, General, 23  
 Bayard, Lieut. George D., 191, 196  
 Beauregard, General P. G. T., 110, 143, 268, 269  
 Belknap, Colonel, 249  
 Bell, Captain, 226, 227  
 Benet, General, 196.  
 Benton, Senator Thomas H., 156  
 Berryman, Commander, 214, 220, 221  
 Bidwell, General, 320  
*Bienville*, U. S. Gunboat, 262, 265  
 Birney, General, 313  
 Black Horse cavalry, 226  
 Blair, General Frank P. 39, 58, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 246, 247, 248, 251, 252, 253  
 Blakeman, Paymaster A Noel, paper of, 231-239  
 Booth, J. Wilkes, 44
- Boston, Capt. Reuben, 224  
 Boyd, Captain, 250  
 Bradford, Lieutenant, 221  
 Bragg, Captain, 112  
 Bragg, Gen'l. B., 38, 79, 143, 269, 271, 293.  
 Breckenridge, Mr., 11  
 Brennan, Tom, 135  
*Brooklyn*, U. S. S., 220  
 Brooks', brigade, 310  
 Brooks, Gen. William H. F., 167, 172, 173, 317  
 Brown, Gen. John C., 251  
 Brown, John, 160  
 Brown, Mr., 189, 190  
 Buell, General, 27, 41, 269, 271  
 Buford, General, 68, 69  
 Buist, Dr., 262  
 Burnside, General Ambrose E., 67, 68, 152, 168, 177, 304, 324  
 Butler, Gen. B. F., 107, 108, 117, 239  
 Butterfield, Gen. Daniel, 130, 137, 286
- Cadet and army service, Reminiscences of, 183-197  
 California, Governor of, 35  
 Cameron, Mr., 40, 145  
 Canty's men, 16  
 Carlin, General, 59  
 Carroll, Sergeant, 227  
 Carroll's brigade, 310, 328  
 Case, Uncle Billy, 98  
 Chancellorsville, The cavalry at, 223-230  
 Charlier, Captain, 74  
 Cheatham, General, 25, 242, 243, 247, 248, 249, 250, 252  
 Church, Col. William C., paper of, 255-266  
 Clark, Col. A. M., 50, 15  
 Clarkson, Col. Floyd, 223  
 Cleburne, General, 18, 23, 25, 243, 247  
 Coleman, Capt. W. O., 276

- Collins, 185  
 Company street, in the, 126-139  
 Comstock, Captain, 258  
 Comstock, Colonel, 196  
 Confederate prisons, in and out of, 64-103  
*Congress*, U. S. S., 1-6, 233  
*Connecticut*, U. S. S., 234  
 Conway, Quartermaster, 218, 219  
 Cook, Mrs., 96  
 Cooke, General Philip, St. G., 195  
 Cooper, 143  
 Corinth, the battle of, 267-279  
*Corwin*, Steamer, 37  
 Couch, General, 304  
 Couthouy, Captain, 236  
 Cox, Major Rowland, paper of, 7-29  
 Craighill, 196  
 Craven, Dr. J. J., 262  
 Crook, General, 321, 329, 333  
 Cross, 194  
*Crusader*, Steamer, 214, 215  
 Cullum, General, 270, 272  
*Cumberland*, U. S. S., 1-6  
 Cummings, Lieutenant - Commander, 124  
 Curtis, General, 109  
 Cushing, Alonzo, 193  
 Custer, General, 193, 194, 298, 321
- Dahlgren, Admiral, 85, 234  
 Daniels, Joseph D., 115, 116  
 Dauchey's battery, 314  
 David, 114  
 Davis, Captain, 88, 93  
 Davis' division, 272, 273, 274, 275  
 Davis, Jefferson, 44, 86, 333  
 Dearborn, Major-General, 140  
 Degress' battery, 249  
 De Kay, Charles, 51  
 De Maistre, 208  
 di Cesnola, Col. Louis, 74  
 Dodge, General G. M., paper of, 240-254  
 Dodge, Major-General, G. M., 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 31  
 Doubleday, General, 69  
 Dowls, Mrs. Mary W., 235  
 Dupont, Admiral S. F., 156, 234, 256, 259, 261, 263, 264, 265  
 Duryea, General Abram, 65  
 Duty and value of patriotism, the, 198-212  
 Dutton, 194
- Early, General, 143, 318, 322, 327, 328, 329, 330
- Erben, Admiral Henry, paper of, 213-222  
*Ericsson*, Steamer, 256  
*Essex*, U. S. S., 120  
 Ewell, General, 69, 334  
 Ewing, Hon. Thomas, 33, 41
- Farragut, Admiral David G., 104, 106, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 231, 239  
 Farragut, Lieut. Loyall, 124  
 Farragut's passage of Port Hudson, 118-125  
 Farrand, Commander, 214, 216, 217, 218, 219, 221  
*Florida*, Confederate Cruiser, 214, 221, 288  
 Foote, Admiral, 221, 231  
 Force's brigade, 240  
 Fort Fisher, the navy in the battle of, 104-117  
 Fox, Colonel, 334  
 Franklin, General, 146, 163, 164  
 Fremont, General, 34, 144  
 French, 110, 294  
 Fuller, Col. J. W., 275, 278  
 Fuller's division, 240, 241, 244, 245  
 Fuller, General, 13, 22, 23  
*Fulton*, Steamer, 214, 215, 218
- Garfield, James A., 46  
 Garnett's brigade, 306  
 Garrard's division, 20, 21, 22, 23  
 Geary, General, 65  
 Genesee, 120, 124  
 Getty, General, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 324, 325, 326, 327, 330, 331  
 Gibbon's division, 169, 294  
 Gibbon, Gen. John, in memory of, 290-301  
 Gibbon, Gen. John, in the Second Corps, 302-315  
 Gidding, 37  
 Gilkey, Colonel, 185  
 Gilman, Lieutenant, 217  
 Goldsborough, Capt. L. M., 233  
 Goler, Captain, 227, 228  
 Gordon, Colonel, 185  
 Gould, Capt. C. J., 332  
 Grant, Gen. Ulysses S., 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 106, 109, 119, 142, 145, 156, 157, 158, 193, 262, 270, 271, 272, 278, 295, 296, 297, 312, 316, 324, 325, 333  
 Grant, General Lewis A., 175, 317, 321, 330, 331  
*Great Republic*, Ship, 256  
 Grier, Captain, 94

Grigsby's brigade, 11

Hackelman, Brigadier-General, 273  
 Halleck, General, 42, 149, 150, 151, 156, 157, 268, 269, 270  
 Hamilton, Brigadier-General, 270, 271, 272, 273, 275  
 Hamilton, Major A. G., 80  
 Hamilton, Uncle Bob, 98, 100  
 Hancock, Gen. W. S., 176, 294, 295, 296, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 313, 314, 325  
 Hardee, General, 18, 20, 23, 24, 241, 242, 243, 247, 248  
 Harlan, J. M., 114  
 Harrison, William H., 46  
*Hartford*, U. S. S., 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124  
 Hascall, Herbert A., 257  
 Haskell, Col. Frank, 306, 312  
 Haskin, Captain, 37  
 Hastings, George S., 95  
 Hay, Mr., 150, 154, 157  
 Heermance, Capt. W. L., paper of, 223, 230  
 Heintzelman, General, 147, 148  
 Heth's division, 71  
 Heyl, Adjutant, 276  
 Hill, Gen. A. P., 314  
 Hill, Gen. D. H., 323  
 Hill, General, 69, 143  
 Hindman, General, 23  
 Hood, Gen. John B., 7, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 24, 58, 92, 143, 240, 241, 242, 243, 245, 248, 249, 251, 253  
 Hooker, Gen. Joseph, 8, 9, 20, 67, 135, 137, 139, 152, 153, 154, 164, 166, 167, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 225, 307, 324  
 Houston, Sam, 276  
 Howard, Gen. Oliver O., 18, 19, 31, 196, 225, 228, 294, 302  
 Howard, Gen. O. O., remarks of, 57-61  
 Howe, General, 167, 169, 173, 175  
 Hubbell, Capt. Henry W., 257  
 Hudson, Commodore William, 233, 234  
 Humphreys, Gen. A. A., 294, 296, 304  
 Hunt, General, 181  
 Hunter, General, 156  
*Huntsville*, U. S. S., 235, 236  
 Hussey, The Rev. John, 75  
 Hyde, General, 179

*Illinois*, the steamer, 259  
 Imboden, General, 72  
 Iowa brigade, 26

Ireland, Archbishop, paper of, 198-212  
 Irish brigade, 187  
 Irish Corcoran Legion, 310  
 Iron brigade, 293  
*Ironsides*, U. S. S., 113  
 Isaacs, Jack, 233

Jackson, General, 107  
 Jackson, Stonewall, 57, 66, 68, 143, 228, 229, 230, 293  
 Johnson, Lieut. Thomas, 69  
 Johnson, President Andrew, 44  
 Johnston, Gen. Albert Sidney, 268, 281  
 Johnston, Gen. Joseph E., 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 44, 106, 158, 240  
 Jonas, Major Edward, 249  
 Jones, Mr., 189, 190

Kearny, Gen. Phil., 34, 307  
 Kearny's division, 67  
 Keenan, Major, 228, 229, 230  
 Keyes, General, 147, 148  
 Kell, Lieutenant, 221  
 Kilpatrick, General, 85, 193  
 King, Capt. Charles, 188, 189, 191  
 King, Horatio, 53  
 King's division, 67  
*Kingfisher*, U. S. S., 235, 239  
 Kirby, 194  
 Knox, Major, 133

Lamb, Col. William, 110, 111, 113  
 Lardner, Admiral, 234  
 Larrabee, Captain, 133  
 Lee, Captain, 76  
 Lee, Fitz Hugh, 143, 223, 228  
 Lee, Gen. L., 223  
 Lee, Gen. Robert E., 44, 56, 57, 62, 70, 71, 72, 106, 143, 145, 150, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 164, 172, 174, 175, 176, 224, 300, 315, 323, 324, 325, 333, 334  
 Leffleth, Sergeant, 69  
 Leggett's division, 240, 247, 248  
 Lightburn's division, 249, 250  
 Lincoln, Abraham, 37, 39, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 55, 89, 100, 104, 202, 205, 221, 263, 266, 322  
 Lincoln, as Commander-in-chief, 140-158  
 Logan, Gen. John A., 8, 12, 13, 14, 24, 25, 59, 242, 249, 253  
 Longshaw, William, 114  
 Longstreet, Gen. James, 66, 100, 143, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 325



Loring's division, 16  
 Lovell's division, 273  
 Luce, Stephen P., 260

MacKenzie, 193  
 Madison, President, 140  
 Maffitt, John N., 214, 215, 221  
 Magruder, Col. John B., 255  
 Marshall, 34  
 Martin, Med. Director, Charles, U. S.  
   N. paper of, 1-6  
 Martin's 6th Independent N. Y. Bat-  
   tery, 225, 236  
 Mason, Colonel and Governor, 34, 35  
 Mason, 235, 236  
 McArthur, General, 273  
 McCabe, Chaplain, 74  
 McClellan, Gen. Geo. B., 67, 141, 144,  
   145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151,  
   152, 154, 161, 283, 284, 311, 317,  
   323  
 McClure, Alexander K., paper of, 140-  
   158  
 McCook, 196  
 McDowell's corps, 65  
 McDowell, General, 142, 143, 146, 147,  
   148, 294  
 McDowell, Major, 274  
 McFadden, Lieutenant, 277  
 McGowan, General, 326  
 McKean, Flag officer, U. S. N., 232  
 McKean's division, 272, 273  
 McKeen, Col. Harry B., 312  
 McKinsty, 124  
 McKnight's battery, 313  
 McLaws' division, 323  
 McMahon, Col. James, 312  
 McMahon, Gen. M. T., 335  
 McMahon, Gen. M. T., paper of, 159-  
   183  
 McPherson, Gen. James B., 18, 19, 20,  
   21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 42, 240, 241,  
   243, 244, 245, 252, 253, 254  
 McVicar, Colonel, 223, 225, 226, 227,  
   230  
 Meade, Gen. Geo., C., 6, 68, 106, 139,  
   152, 154, 155, 225, 295, 296, 304,  
   305, 310, 312, 313, 314, 324, 330, 333  
 Medina, Capt. Benj. F., 224  
 Meredith, Paymaster, W. T. U. S. N.,  
   paper of, 118-125  
*Merrimac*, Confederate steamer, 1-6,  
   231  
 Merritt General, Wesley, 193, 321, 333  
 Mersey's brigade, 249, 250, 251  
 Michie, Gen. Peter, paper of, 183-197  
 Mike, Regimental bugler, 130, 131

Miles' division, 310, 314  
*Minnesota*, U. S. S., 5, 108, 114, 265  
*Mississippi*, U. S. S. 120, 122, 123, 124,  
   125, 238, 239  
*Monitor*, U. S. S., 2, 5, 6, 231  
*Monongahela*, U. S. S. 120, 122, 124  
 Morgan, Gen. John, 86  
 Mott, General, 308, 314  
 Mower, Col. Joseph, 273, 274, 276  
  
 Naval Victory at Port Royal, 255-266  
 Neals, Sheriff, 99  
 Neills, 175  
 Nelson, 112  
 Newton, Gen. John, 20, 167, 168, 169,  
   171, 173  
*Niagara*, U. S. S., 232  
 Nolan, Philip, 116  
*North Star*, Steamer, 280  
  
*Ocean Express*, Steamer, 258, 259, 260  
*Octorara*, U. S. S. 288  
 Oglesby, General 273  
 Ohlenschlager, Dr., 180  
 O'Niel, Act. master, Charles, 283  
 Ord, General, 271, 272, 278  
 O'Rourke, 194  
 Ould, Mr., 86  
 Owen's brigade, 310  
  
 Parker, Lieutenant-Commander, James,  
   paper of, 104-117  
 Patriotism, the duty and value of, 198-  
   212  
 Patterson, General, 40, 142, 144  
 Paul, General, 69  
 Pennington, 193  
 Pennington's battery, 225  
 Pennsylvania Reserve corps, 142  
 Pensacola, Surrender of Navy Yard at  
   213-222  
 Pickett, Capt. Geo. E., 292  
 Pickett's division, 71, 306, 324  
 Pierce, Lieutenant, 83  
 Platt, Colonel, 181  
 Pleasonton, Gen. Alfred, 225, 228, 229,  
   230  
 Polk's corps, 16  
 Polk, President, James K., 140  
 Pollock, Adj. Otis W., 277  
 Pope, Gen. John, 66, 67, 149, 150, 155,  
   157, 268, 269  
 Port Royal, Naval victory at, 256-266  
*Port Royal*, the steamer, 284  
 Porter Admiral, David D., 43, 55, 107,  
   109, 111, 119, 221, 231, 239  
 Porter, B. F., 113, 114

- Porter, Col. Peter, 312  
 Porter, Gen. Fitz John, 66, 311  
 Porter, Gen. Horace, 57, 61, 193, 261  
 Porter, Gen. Horace, remarks of, 52-56  
 Port Hudson, Farragut's passage of, 118-125  
 Powell, Captain, 88, 90, 103  
 Pratt, Gen. Calvin E., 165  
 Preston, S. W., 113, 114  
 Price, Capt. Cicero, U. S. N., 235, 236  
 Price, Gen. Sterling, 271, 272, 273, 275  
 Prime, Capt. Fredrick E., 272  
 Proctor, Redfield, 317
- Raines, 110  
 Ramseur's division, 328  
 Randol, 193  
 Randolph, Capt. Victor M., 218  
 Reminiscences of Cadet and Army service, 183-197  
 Reno's division, 67  
 Renshaw, Lieutenant, 217, 218  
 Reynolds, Gen. John F., 67, 68, 69, 152, 164, 166, 167, 175, 196, 304, 305.  
 Richardson, Albert D., 74  
 Richardson, Lieutenant, 258  
*Richmond*, U. S. S., 120, 122, 124  
 Ricketts, General, 181  
 Ricketts's division, 65, 66, 67  
 Riley, Pat, 130, 131, 133  
*Roanoke*, U. S. S., 3  
 Roberts, Lieut. Charles, 51  
 Robinette, Lieutenant, 275  
 Robinette battery, 274, 275  
 Rode's division, 328  
 Rodgers, Capt. C. R. P., U. S. N., 26  
 Rodgers, Capt. Geo. W. 282, 284  
 Rodgers, Colonel, 276  
 Roosevelt, Mr., 70.  
 Rose, Col. Thos. E., 80.  
 Rosecrans, General, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 278  
 Ross, 82, 86  
 Rowan, Admiral, 231  
 Rudd, Lieutenant, 66
- Sabine*, U. S. S., 220  
 Sanitary commission, 76  
*San Jacinto*, U. S. S., 236  
*Santiago de Cuba*, Steamer, 288, 289  
 Sawyer, Captain, 76  
 Saxton, 196  
 Schofield, Gen. John M., 8, 9, 16, 18, 19, 195, 252
- Scott, Asst. Sec. Thos. A., 145  
 Scott, Gen. W., 40, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 155, 156, 195, 255, 292  
 Sedgwick, Gen. John, 159-182  
 Sedgwick, Gen. John, 152, 294, 302, 304, 314, 316, 322, 324, 326  
 Sedgwick, Maj. William D. 163  
 Selfridge, 238  
 Semmes, Captain, 221  
 Seward, 37, 150  
 Shelby, Col. J. O. 184, 186  
 Shepherd's battery, 110  
 Sheridan, Gen. Philip H. 48, 52, 152, 182, 193, 230, 296, 297, 299, 311, 318, 320, 321, 322, 328, 329, 330, 333, 334  
 Sherman, Gen. Thos. W. 255, 256  
 Sherman, Gen. William T., 7, 8, 9, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27  
 Sherman, Gen. W. T., in commemoration of, 30-63  
 Sherman, Hon. John, remarks of, 31-50  
 Sickles, Gen. Daniel E. 164, 167, 176, 228, 229, 305, 330  
 Sigel's corps, 66  
 Simmons, Senator, 263  
 Slemmer, Captain, 214, 215, 217, 219, 220  
 Slidell, Honorable, 235, 236  
 Slocum, Gen. Henry W., 31, 58, 59, 61, 163, 166, 225, 226  
 Slocum, Gen. Henry W., remarks of, 61-63  
 Smith, Admiral Melancton, 120, 124, 125  
 Smith, Col. J. L., 276, 277  
 Smith, Gen. Baldy, 163, 164, 311, 317, 323  
 Smith, Gen. C. F., 27, 28, 73, 89, 90, 91, 106, 158, 183, 240, 243, 244, 250, 252, 253, 269, 279, 316  
 Smith, Gen. Giles A., 25, 240, 243, 247, 298  
 Smith, Gen. Kirby, 143,  
 Smith, Gen. Morgan L., 249  
 Smith, Georgia Militia, 243  
 Smith, Mr., 188, 189  
 Smyth, Gen. Thos. A., 314, 315  
 Snake Creek Gap, 7-29  
*Sonoma*, U. S. S., 287  
 Spotts, Captain, U. S. N., 234  
 Sprague's brigade, 23, 243, 247  
 Sprague, Charles E., paper of, 126-139  
 Sprague, Col. J. W., 277  
 Stanley, Gen. D. S., paper of, 267-279  
 Stannard, General, 317

- Stanton, Admiral O. F., paper of, 280-289  
 Stanton, Secretary, 42, 44, 149, 151, 152  
 Starr, Capt. George H., paper of, 64-103  
 Steedman, Captain, 262  
 Steinwehr, General, 57  
 Stewart's battery, 282  
 Stewart's corps, 242, 243, 251, 252  
*St. Marys*, U. S. S., 280, 281  
 Stone, Gen. Charles P., 161, 302  
 Stoneman, General, 93, 225  
 Stoneman's raid, 73, 91  
 Straight, Col. A. D., 74  
 Strong, Colonel, 27  
 Strong, General, 244, 245  
 Stuart, 143  
 Stuart, Gen. J. E. B., 227, 228, 230  
 Sturgis, 294  
 Sullivan's brigade, 275  
 Sumner, General, 147, 148, 163  
 Sumpter, Fort, 39, 114, 205  
*Supply*, U. S. S., 213, 214, 215, 219, 220, 221  
 Surrender of the Navy Yard at Pensacola, 213-222  
 Swayne, Gen. Wager, 30, 32, 276  
 Sweeny, Gen. Thos. W., 12, 13, 22, 34, 37, 241, 245  
 Swinton, Mr., 325, 326  
  
 Tatnall, Commodore, 260  
 Taylor, General, 112, 140, 156  
 Taylor, Gen. Zachary, 46  
*Teaser*, Confed. steamer, 3, 4, 5  
*Tennessee*, Rebel ram, 221  
 Terry, Gen. A. H., 109, 111, 299  
 Thatcher, Admiral Thos. K., 233  
 Thomas, Gen. George H., 7, 8, 9, 16, 18, 19, 27, 28, 40, 57, 58, 240, 252  
 Thrush, Colonel, 273  
*Tioga*, U. S. S., 282, 283, 287  
 Tompkins, General, 179, 180  
 Tracy, Col. A. S., 320, 321, 331  
 Tucker, James E., 223  
 Turner, Major, 75, 82, 85, 86  
 Turner, Uncle John, 97, 98  
  
 Upton's charge, 326  
 Upton, Gen. Emory, 193  
  
 Vanderbilt, Ensign A., 108  
*Vanderbilt*, U. S. S., 115  
  
 Van Dorn, General, 271, 272, 278  
 Veatch's division, 12, 13  
 Vermont brigade, 175, 306  
 Vermont brigade, the old, 316-335  
 Von Borche, Major Heros, 227  
  
*Wabash*, U. S. S., 260, 264  
*Wachusett*, U. S. S., 287  
 Wade, Senator, 156  
 Wadsworth, General, 147  
 Walke, Captain, U. S. N., 214, 216, 221  
 Walker, Col. Aldace F., paper of, 316-335  
 Walker, General, 23  
 Walker, Gen. Francis A., paper of, 302-315  
 Warner, Gen. James M., 320, 331, 332  
 Warren, General, 306, 310  
 Warren, Lieut. G. K., 195, 196  
 Webb, Inspector-General, 132  
 Weitzel, General, 196  
 Weld, 257  
 Welker's battery, 245  
 Welles, Sec. Gideon, 115, 117  
 Wentworth, Thos, 64  
 Wheeler, General, 11, 18, 20, 23, 24, 242, 243  
 Whipple, Col. Tom, 257, 259  
 White, Captain, 228  
 Whiting, 110  
 Whittier, Gen. Chas. A., 179, 180  
 Wilcox, 127  
 Wilkes, Admiral, 236, 287  
 Williams, Capt. Geo. A., 277  
 Williams, Gen. Seth, 181  
 Williamson, Gen. James A., 250  
 Wilson, Harry, 193  
 Wilson's, Billy, Zouaves, 220  
 Winder, General, 76, 86, 89  
 Wood's, Charles R., division, 250  
 Woodhull, Capt. Max, 233, 234  
 Woodruff, Maj. C. A., paper of, 290-301  
 Wool, General, 35  
 Worden, Captain, U. S. N., 235  
 Wright, Gen. Horatio G., 181, 256, 257, 262, 321, 326, 330  
*Wyandotte*, U. S. S., 214, 215, 217, 219, 220  
  
*Yorktown*, Confed. steamer, 3, 4, 5  
  
*Zouave*, U. S. tug, 3



















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